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SEPTEMBER.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

Sweet is the voice that calls
From babbling waterfalls
In meadows where the downy seeds are flying;
And soft the breezes blow,
And sidying come and go
In faded gardens where the rose is dying.

Among the stubbled corn
The blithe quail pipes at morn,
The merry partridge drums in hidden places;
And glittering insects gleam
Above the reedy stream
Where busy spiders spin their filmy laces.

At eve cool shadows fall
Across the garden wall,
And on the clustered grapes to purple turning;
And pearly vapors lie
Along the eastern sky,
Where the broad harvest moon is redly burning.

Ah! soon on field and hill
The winds shall whistle chill,
And patriarch swallows call their flocks together,
To fly from frost and snow,
And seek for lands where blow
The fairer blossoms of a balmier weather.

The pollen-dusted bees
Search for the honey lees
That linger in the last flowers of September;
While plaintive mourningdoves
Coo sadly to their loves
Of the dead summer they so well remember.

The cricket chirps all day,
"O fairest Summer, stay!"
The squirrel eyes askance the chestnuts browning;
The wildfowl fly afar
Above the foamy bar,
And hasten southward ere the skies are frowning.

Now comes a fragrant breeze
Through the dark cedar trees,
And round about my temples fondly lingers
In gentle playfulness,
Like to the soft caress
Bestowed in happier days by loving fingers.

Yet, though a sense of grief
Comes with the yellow leaf,
And memory makes the summer doubly pleasant,
In all my Autumn dreams
A future summer gleams
Passing the fairest glories of the present.

WEAKER THAN A WOMAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DORA THORNE," "THE COST OF HER LOVE," "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT."

CHAPTER IV.

The news of an engagemen was always well received in Lilford; it was something to discuss, to think of—something in which both maids and matrons took a lively interest; and it was certain that no engagement ever courted so much discussion as this. How intensely the young farmers in the neighborhood detested Felix Lonsdale for having won beautiful Violet! Each one made up his mind that Felix Lonsdale should do no more business for him, and wondered why she preferred a lawyer to a farmer. All the old people thought it a most suitable alliance. Felix and Violet, they said, were equal in position, and marriages of that kind were the best. Mothers, who had daughters of their own to marry were thankful that beautiful Violet could rival them no longer. The girls thought that Violet had won a prize, for there was certainly no one in all the country-side like Felix.

There was one pure, gentle heart to whom the news of the engagement came like a terrible blow, although it had long been expected. Evelyn Lester had never even owned to herself that she loved Felix Lonsdale, yet, when she heard the news, it seemed to her that the bright face of heaven was hidden from her by a dark funeral pall. They had all been children together, and in their childish quarrels it was always Evelyn who defended Felix. He could do no wrong in her eyes; in her opinion the wide world held no other so brave, so handsome, or so noble; and the childish love had unconsciously grown with her—she called it friendship, and believed it to be nothing else. Felix had a real friendship for her, a real admiration, a great esteem, but nothing like love. He lent her books, he frequently asked Mrs. Lonsdale to invite her to the house; but it was all because he was sorry for her, and thought her life lonely and sad. Evelyn was an orphan, left to the tender mercies of a strong-minded aunt, Jane Lester, mistress of the pretty little farm known as Outlands. Miss Lester would say of herself, "I am nothing if I am not strong-minded;" and therein she spoke the truth.

She looked like a strong minded woman. She was thin and angular; she had what she called a useful complexion—the sun did not darken it, nor did the wind ever freshen it into deeper bloom: her gray hair was braided in most severely uncompromising style, her dress was of plain, rich material. In writing the word "woman" she always used a capital "W," and a capital "H" in "humanity." Of men as a whole she had the poorest possible opinion; she had the profoundest contempt for their sentiments, principles, and inventions. She went to extreme lengths in her views about the rights of women. Where there was a man, she was accustomed to say, there was mischief. "If you want anything done well, do it yourself," she counselled; "do not leave it to men." She had a certain conviction that if the world were governed by women it would be quite another place. She did not dislike men, she had simply a superb contempt for them—a lofty pity and compassion that were infinitely amusing to the objects of them.

It was the puzzle of the whole neighborhood how so sweet a girl as Eve Lester could have grown up under the charge of one like her aunt Jane. Eve was not beautiful. She was the perfect type of an English girl—graceful, healthy, with a rounded figure, a clear complexion, fair brown hair, red, ripe lips, a face that one would call sweet rather than beautiful; the dark gray eyes were clear and tender, long lashes shading them—a frank, noble soul spoke from her eyes; her lips were firm and sensitive, with sweet and gracious curves about them. Of a hundred men perhaps ninety-nine would have passed Eve by and thought but little of her; the hundreth would have considered her face one of the sweetest and dearest. There was a quiet dignity about her, a graceful ease and self possession that delighted her aunt Evelyn had a small fortune entirely at her own command, but her aunt was always at hand to see that there was no undue expense.

The Outlands was a pretty farm, not more than half a mile from Lilford, and Miss Lester was supposed to have made money. She, with her niece, belonged to the gentry, but, owing to the elder woman's peculiarities, the two ladies visited but seldom and seldom received any visitors.

If there was one man in Jane Lester's eyes less contemptible than another, it was certainly Felix Lonsdale. "The boy has a beautiful face," she was accustomed to say of him, "and beauty is a woman's gift." So because he had a "woman's gift" Miss Lester looked more kindly on him. She liked to see him at the Outlands. She gave him any amount of good advice; she was pleased that he should be a friend of Evelyn's.

No one was more delighted than Jane Lester to hear of the legacy, but the engagement did not please her so well. Love and marriage were folly in her eyes.

"I am disappointed in you, Felix Lonsdale," she said sharply. "I thought you had a little more sense than the generality of men. Pray expect no congratulations from me—I have none to give."

But Eve smiled at him with her clear tender eyes.

"I am very much pleased," she said, "for I know that you love Violet dearly."

"We shall always be friends," he told her.

And she answered him with a happy smile on her sweet face—"Always."

They would always be friends; for she desired nothing better in life than the friendship of Felix Lonsdale.

Miss Lester was perhaps a trifle more disagreeable than usual for the next two or three days, and then, to all outward appearance, everything went on as usual at the Outlands; but to Eve Lester life was never quite the same again. She was innocently unconscious of her love. If any one had suddenly taxed her with it, she would most indignantly have denied it. She hardly knew that the love of the women differed from the love of the child. She did not know why the smiling earth and the fair heavens had so suddenly grown dark to her. She did not know why the spring of her life had left her.

* * * * *

Darcy Lonsdale had taken Vale House; he had for once in his lifetime the pleasure of ordering new carpets and pretty furniture. Mrs. Lonsdale was delighted. She had engaged a treasure of a nursery-governess, and prepared herself to enjoy life in real earnest. The deed of partnership had been drawn up, and the firm was now know as Lonsdale & Son. Every one agreed that Darcy had done a very wise thing in making his clever, bright, intellectual son a partner. Felix had taken the pretty cottage *ornée*, and his spare time was devoted to preparing it for his beautiful bride. He had seen some fine photographs one day that he fancied would look well framed and hung upon the walls. He asked Violet to look at them; but he could not get her to speak freely upon anything. The photographs were beautiful—with the most charming of smiles she condescended to say so; that was all. She was evidently in an amiable humor, and Felix resolved to make the most of it.

"Violet, do come and see the house!" he begged. "You say that you never visited it while the Hendersons lived there. You cannot tell how pretty the rooms are; do come and see them."

It was a brilliantly beautiful day in July; the sun shone on lilies and roses, on flowers of every hue; earth lay in the warm heat and brilliant haze—there was a hush and sweet brooding silence over all. Violet could not refuse; putting aside all other thoughts, it would be pleasant to see the interior of a pretty house. Mrs. Lonsdale offered to go also, and the three started together. But Mrs. Lonsdale had been in love herself, and she had pity on her stepson. When they had admired the beautiful grounds and gardens, she said laughingly:

"The kitchen will not interest you; it does me. I will go and inspect it."

Then Felix showed Violet the pretty rooms he had planned for her.

"The charm of them," he said, "is that they are full of light and brightness; from every window you see flowers and trees, through every door comes a breath of perfumed air. Oh, my Violet, we can be so happy here!"

"Is that jessamine growing yonder?" she asked. "Do gather a few sprays, Felix. I think I am fonder of jessamine than I am of any flower that blows."

He went in compliance with her wish. What request of hers could he have refused? And Violet Haye stood alone in the home that her lover sought to make hers. She stood there, dainty and bewitching; she looked around. The rooms were very pretty; she tried to imagine herself mistress there; she tried to picture herself living there, going in and out, waiting for Felix, giving orders. She tried to realise what life would be like when she was married and lived there. There would be no future to look forward to, no sweet, bright possibilities. "I should know all my life then," she thought, "it would be nothing brighter than this;" and the dainty little foot tapped the floor. "Here it would all begin and end; there would be no more dreaming"—and she had dreamed wildly of a different life from this. Still she loved Felix.

"I wonder," said the dainty young beauty to herself, "in what I differ from other girls. I know not one but many who would gladly change their fate for mine, who would marry Felix Lonsdale and be happy in his love, who would think this pretty house a palace, and would find the contentment and true happiness of a lifetime within its walls; why cannot I do the same? What is it that I am always looking for, hoping for, expecting? What more do I want? I cannot understand myself—and I am sure no one else can understand me."

The violet eyes glanced wistfully round the pretty rooms; why was she not content?

"I love Felix," she told herself; "and it seems to me that if I made an effort I could be happy and contented here. What is the effort that I have to make? I love Felix; nothing on earth can make me alter that fact." Yet she did not feel at ease. There was a vague shadowy feeling of something wanting that she had not yet found.

Felix amused her with his raptures when he returned. It was so novel, so delightful to see her there; and the day was never forgotten by him, because she had been gracious to him upon it.

CHAPTER V.

The inhabitants of Lilford were pleased at Darcy Lonsdale's good fortune. He deserved it, they said; his honest, honorable, industrious life had been spent amongst them; they had known him as boy and man; they had been interested in his marriage, in his children, in his business; he was one of themselves; they had been interested in his joys and sorrows and in his welfare, and now they were pleased at his good fortune.

With this sudden and unexpected gleam of prosperity came other gleams; his business increased—and Darcy Lonsdale owned to himself that he was a most fortunate man. He removed with his household to Vale House; and Felix began to think that he might induce Violet to marry him before the end of the year. He did not often speak to her of their marriage, for it was a difficult task; she would evade the question in a hundred different ways; she would laugh, yet look charming—do anything, in fact, but reply to his inquiry as to when they should be united.

He went to the Limes one lovely summer evening, quite resolved upon not coming away without a definite answer. Violet was looking even more charming than usual; she wore a white dress with blush roses, and her fair girlish face was like a sweet flower. He persuaded her to come out with him, beguiling her on to the lawn under the pretext of showing her the gorgeous western sky.

"I do not care for sunsets, Felix," she said. "I cannot go into raptures over them. I see the sun set in some fashion or other every evening."

But he was so determined that she thought it less trouble to accede to his wish. The sight of the glorious sky made her thoughtful; then, when she was in a frame of mind proper for listening, he turned to her. How dazzlingly beautiful her face was in the sunlight!

"Violet," he said, "I want to quote a couple of lines from a familiar ballad to you. Can you guess what it is?"

"No, I cannot; I do not care for familiar ballads," she replied. "What is it?"

"You know 'My Pretty Jane,'" he said. "The lines I want to quote to you are these:

"'Name the day, the wedding-day,
And I will buy the ring.'

Now, sweet Violet, that is just what I want you to do—tell me when that happy day will dawn for me. Do not let the summer sunshine and the summer flowers all die before you are my wife."

She turned her startled face to his.

"You are cruel, Felix," she said. "You always spoil these lovely sunny days by talking about marriage."

"My heart is full of it," he replied—"at least it is full of you. I do not wish to startle you, Violet, but give me one kind word to dream about now. I am always wondering, 'When will our marriage take place? When will my darling consent? When will the end come to all my uncertainties, doubts, and fears? When shall I be able to say to myself—On such a day I shall bring home my wife?'"

She answered half impatiently.

"You make so terribly sure of everything, Felix."

"Have I not the right to do so in this case?" he asked, laughing half sadly at her.

"I did not quite promise, you know, Felix."

"Perhaps not in so many words, Violet, but in honor you are bound to be my wife."

"I am willing to be your wife, Felix, but let me enjoy my youth a little longer. I am only nineteen—there is no hurry."

"You forget," he interrupted, "how dearly I love you, Violet, and how I long for you to be with me. If I thought you did not love me, Violet, I would not urge my request—I would go far away, and occupy my life as well as I could—nay, I would rather die than make you unhappy. If you do not love me, I will not hold you pledged to me, Violet."

"But I do love you," said she, looking up at him with sweet perplexed eyes; "still, Felix, it seems so sudden——"

"Hardly sudden, darling," he interrupted, "when I have loved you since you were seven years old. You will be just as happy when you are my wife as you are now—will you not?"

"I cannot tell," she replied. If she had spoken the real truth, she would have told him that she was unwilling to lay down her sovereignty—that the homage and admiration she received were very precious to her—that she enjoyed them—that she liked to know she was the queen of the country-side. All that of course would end when she was married. The married ladies she knew led dull lives—or dull they seemed to her—spent in the routine of duty. They superintended their households, nursed their children, directed their servants. It seemed dreary work to her—a life that held little. She had hoped for more than this; her brilliant beauty ought to bring her a brighter fate than that which these plain-faced matrons had met.

While she sat musing with these thoughts plainly written on her fair face, Felix was looking earnestly at her.

"Let me say September, Violet," he pleaded; "that is a glorious month, and the house will be quite ready. My darling, gladden my heart with one word."

But he was never quite sure whether she had spoken the word or not; her eyes were dim with tears, and she murmured something to the effect that she loved him—had always loved him; while something of remorse seemed to tinge her manner. Her fingers thrilled him with their soft touch; her lovely lips quivered as she talked to him—but he could never tell whether she had whispered the word he wanted.

That evening, when he reached home, Evelyn Lester was there, and a sense of rest came over him at the first glance at her sweet face. She went up to him with the gentle grace and dignity that characterised her.

"Felix, I have heard good news—you are favored in fortune and in love. Is it all true?"

"Yes"—he told her it was all true; he had been spending the evening at the Limes—he had just left Violet.

He walked home with Evelyn, and he was struck with the strange sense of rest that came over him. She was not beautiful, but the sweet face was very fair and very tender, her voice musical and full of sympathy; she spoke so kindly of beautiful Violet, she praised her so generously and warmly, she spoke with such real enthusiasm of her loveliness, of the admiration she excited, of her brilliancy, that his heart warmed to her. She listened with such sweet sympathy to all that he had to say—to his history of the cottage, and of the pretty furniture and pictures he hoped to place therein; she was interested in it all. He said to himself that it was strange what perfect rest he found with her, a something which he could not describe, a sense of deep tranquility and repose.

"I think, Evelyn," he said, as he stood at the hall door of the Outlands, "that no man was ever so blessed. I have the truest and fairest of loves, and the truest and warmest of friends."

The moon was shining brightly, and Eve stood in silence for a few minutes, watching him.

"You will need a friend," she thought—"and when you do, you shall not fail to find one."

CHAPTER VI.

"That young man ought to be satisfied with his lot in life," said Jane Lester, as her niece told her of Felix Lonsdale's successes.

"He is quite satisfied, auntie," Evelyn returned gently.

"The worst thing a man can do is to marry a girl with a pretty face," said the aunt. "Pretty girls are a mistake—they think themselves too good for anything. Felix Lonsdale has acted foolishly—Violet Haye will never make him a good wife."

"She is young, and she loves him very dearly," remarked Evelyn.

"Youth and love—would any man build his house on such foundations?" said her aunt. "I tell you, Evelyn, it is a mistake, and Lonsdale will find it so. I read a character quickly, and I have read Violet Haye's."

"She loves him," repeated Evelyn, who could imagine nothing more unanswerable.

"Love—we know what a lasting sentiment that is," sneered Miss Lester. "If he married a sensible woman with a nice little fortune, I should have some hope; but the very curl of that girl's hair shows what she is."

Evelyn laughed as she thought of the glorious golden hair that had always been Violet's glory.

"There is no other hair in Lilford like it, auntie," she replied.

"It is a good thing," was the retort—"I am no friend to nonsense."

No unfriendly criticisms reached Felix Lonsdale's ears—none could have hurt him. He had now the great prize of his life; he was happy beyond all power of words to tell. It pleased him too that all his friends and neighbors took such kindly interest in him; it was pleasant to meet with congratulations and good wishes—to see life lying so fair and so clear before him—to feel his youth and his strength—to feel his happiness thrilling every vein. He felt that he had nothing left in life to wish for; Heaven had been good to him and had granted him his heart's desire. He would have felt a little happier perhaps had Violet been less coy. But that very coyness had a charm of its own; it suited her; he could not imagine her other than coy: and, as for doubt fear or mistrust, such shadows never darkened his mind. The heaven of his love was clear and cloudless. Violet would grow less coy in time; it was better for her to be shy and reserved as she was than lay herself out for admiration as some did.

He had settled in his own mind that he would persuade her to become his wife before chill October killed the flowers and stripped the trees. So he thought and hoped and dreamed, while a cloud was rising in the distance no larger than a man's hand.

One day Darcy Lonsdale returned with a perplexed look on his face to his new house. His wife, wondering at it, asked him—

"What is the matter, Darcy?"

After thinking for a few minutes he answered—

"Nothing; my brain seems to be full of foolish fancies."

The next time he returned home it was evening, and the pleasant tea-table, the happy circle of bright faces, might have gladdened any man's heart; but Darcy Lonsdale looked dull. Again his wife asked what was wrong, and he laughed uneasily, she thought.

"The very air seems thick with fancies," he answered. "I saw three of my best friends this morning standing in a group in Castle Street, and when I joined them I knew by the startled, embarrassed expression on each man's face that they had been talking about me."

"What could they have to say about you?" asked Kate. "It was all fancy, Darcy."

"No; I am sure they were speaking of me. I went to the bank this morning, and as I was entering the door I distinctly heard the manager say, 'Mistaken in Lonsdale.' I heard the words as plainly as you hear them now. He was talking to one of the partners, and they were both cool, I thought, in their manner."

Kate threw her arms round his neck and kissed his anxious face.

"Why should any one talk about you or be cool to you, dear? You have done no wrong."

"No; but there is something—I am quite sure there is something, Kate—in the minds of the people about me. I cannot imagine what it is."

Kate tried to cheer him; she laughed at the notion. What could there be? She knew that there was no one like him. No one could accuse him of a mean action; his life had always been fair, open, loyal, and transparent. It was absurd. He must be out of health; he should go away and rest himself for a time. People cool to him indeed! She would like to see any one treat him with less respect and honor than he deserved! The kind, tender face flushed, the kind eyes filled with tears. She would have done battle for him with the whole world. There was nothing in what he said, she felt quite sure, but failing health.

Yet she waited anxiously for him the next day. She was somewhat surprised, for there had been a perfect deluge of tradesmen's bills—an occurrence that had never happened before. The baker had sent in his bill, and the butcher wanted ready money; the upholsterers who had furnished Vale House pressed for a settlement in consequence of unlooked-for losses. Kate showed the bills to her husband.

"What does it mean?" she asked wonderingly.

"It means, my dear, that there is some subtle agency at work against us—I cannot tell what. It means also that the tradespeople must be paid at once. Indeed, Kate, we should have been wiser had we waited till the legacy had been paid to us before we came here."

"But it is certain," said Kate, a little anxiously.

"As certain as fate," he replied; and they talked a little more cheerfully about what they would do when the money was at command.

That same evening Felix came home looking slightly preoccupied. He had seen one of their oldest clients go into George Malcolm's office, and the Vicar of the parish, the Reverend Daniel Hunter, had passed him with the coldest of bows. He also had an impression that there was something wrong. He could tell neither what it was nor why it was.

Felix thought that there would be time to walk over to the Limes. He had a very beautiful book that he had bought for Violet, and he wanted to give it to her.

It struck him, when he entered the drawing room at the Limes, that the three assembled there had been speaking of him, their greeting was so awkward, so constrained, so unlike the genial, kindly reception that had always been given to him hitherto. Mrs. Haye held out her hand to him, but her eyes fell, and her husband's half-murmured words were inaudible; Violet looked embarrassed; and for the first time under that hospitable roof the young lover felt ill at ease.

When he laid the volume on the table, Mr. Haye took it up.

"This must have cost something," he said, "for it is very handsome. It would be better to save money than to spend it—we none of us know when an evil day may come."

"I do not fear evil days," remarked Felix, with all the sanguine hope of a young man.

"The wisest amongst us may expect them," said Mr. Haye briefly.

Then the conversation languished, and Felix grew so uncomfortable that he decided upon returning home. He had no misgivings—he thought that he had called upon an inauspicious moment—he had perhaps interrupted some domestic conference. He cared only to see Violet. If she would go to the gate with him, so that he would have time for a few words, all would be well.

But when he had said good night to the two seniors, and asked Violet if she would walk to the gate with him, Mrs. Haye interposed.

"It is too cold," she said. "Violet has been complaining of a headache all day; she must not go out."

And the tone was so decided, so stern, that Felix could not oppose Mrs. Haye. He held Violet's hand one minute in his; he tried to look in the depths of her beautiful eyes, but they drooped from his, and he could not see them. He left her with a few whispered words, feeling more unhappy than he had ever felt before.

The night was beautiful; the wind was soft and fragrant, the sky calm and clear, the moon shining brightly. He smiled as he asked himself why he should be unhappy. What was there to make him so? Why need he feel depressed? Yet the very air around him was filled with whisperings—the night-wind full of sighs. "I am growing fanciful," he said to himself; "and what tangible evils have I to grasp?"

There was nothing but a cloud of fancies; his prospects were bright enough. He said to himself over and over again that no one was so fortunate. Had he not a partnership? Had he not a certainty of calling the loveliest girl in the country his wife? What had he to fear? Yet what was the strange dull pain that made his brave young heart fail him? What caused the strange shuddering that came over him? Why had he a keen and penetrating, a vague, indefinite feeling of an evil day to come? He tried to repress it; he could understand women being nervous, but not men.

For the first time he noticed that night a look of anxiety on his father's face, and he asked him what brought it there.

"Shadows—nothing but shadows; fancies—troublesome fancies," was the reply; yet it was strange that the son turned away with a feeling almost of despair.

Nor was the mystery lessened when on the day following Mrs. Lonsdale, going on her daily round of shopping, met the Vicar's wife, Mrs. Hunter, who stopped to speak to her.

"That is a very sad affair, Mrs. Lonsdale," she said, and Kate, looking at her, asked her what affair she meant.

She looked so entirely unconscious that the Vicar's wife was surprised.

"Have you heard no sad news of—of—any one?" she asked; and Kate answered "No."

Then Mrs. Hunter related some trifling little story; and even when she was relating it Kate told herself that she was inventing it. With her honest, straightforward eyes she looked at the Vicar's lady.

"You are not telling me what was in your mind when you first spoke to me," she said. "What were you thinking of, Mrs. Hunter?"

But Mrs. Hunter, after laughingly parrying the remark, hastily said good morning in a very embarrassed fashion, and walked away.

Mrs. Hunter's remark could mean nothing; yet the heart of the loving anxious wife grew heavy within her. Sad news? What sad news could there be affecting her or hers? And, if there was news about any one else, why could she not know what it was?

She was the third who went home that day with a terrible sense of foreboding. Her pretty house seemed almost to oppress her. She wished that she had not burdened herself with a nursery-governess; as for the new silk dress, it no longer gave her the least pleasure. What was this cloud hanging over her husband and her children? Was it only nervous fancy, or was there evil looming in the distance?

She was soon to know; and when she did know it proved to be even greater than she feared.

CHAPTER VII.

"I am very sorry—I think it unjust; but it is quite impossible to say how it would end," said George Malcolm the lawyer.

For the secret was known now—the shadow had become a substance, the vague fancies had all assumed a form, the airy nothings had become realities so stern and so cruel that they had driven Darcy Lonsdale almost to despair. Mrs. Hardman's heir-at-law, James Hardman, had given legal notice that he intended to contest his relative's will on the ground of undue influence. He maintained—and nothing could shake his opin-

lon—that Darcy Lonsdale had taken undue advantage of his position, that he had influenced a weakminded woman, and had persuaded her to leave him the half of her money. It was a clever ruse, advising her to send for another lawyer; but it would not help him.

Mr. Lonsdale found that the rumors about him had been growing daily; that his friends and neighbors were all talking of him, while he himself had not the faintest idea of the mischief that was abroad. James Hardman had been in Lilford—that he knew, and the fact had not interested him in any way; but he did not know that James Hardman had been silently destroying his reputation, had called upon his old friends, and had in the most subtle fashion, insinuated that there had been a conspiracy against him, and that he intended to dispute the will. Every one in Lilford knew this before the least rumor of it reached Darcy Lonsdale. He went at once to Mr. Malcolm; but the honest lawyer had no cheering news for him.

"I am a lawyer myself," he said, "but I can never tell how a law suit will end; it may take the right turn, and again it may take a wrong one."

"But," returned Darcy Lonsdale, "Mrs. Hardman meant me to have the money, did she not? That one broad fact no one can dispute."

"I believe honestly that she intended you to have it. I know she did. She talked to me some time about the good it would do to you and your children."

"Then what can there be found to dispute? She intended to give me the money, and she did give it—what is it to any one?" cried Darcy Lonsdale.

"The law deals heavily with cases like this. James Hardman will plead that he is heir-in-law, that he is the rightful heir to the late Elizabeth Hardman, that he had been brought up in expectation of receiving the money, and that you have taken an undue advantage of your position as her legal adviser and friend to induce her to leave it to you."

"But," declared Mr. Lonsdale, "I did no such thing. I swear to you I never asked, influenced, or said one word to her about it. How dare any man say such a thing of me?"

"James Hardman has been brought up to believe that he would inherit twelve thousand pounds, and, finding six of it given elsewhere, he is very angry about it, and says some bitter things."

"But how is it possible that any one who knows me could believe that I have acted unfairly? How can my old friends and neighbors believe it? I have lived amongst them all my life—they ought to know me better. I should not believe such a scandal of any one of them"—and tears of wounded pride and wounded affection stood in his eyes. "What are a man's friends worth, Malcolm, if they believe evil of him so easily?"

"Perhaps they do not believe it," said George Malcolm.

"Then why do they not say so? Why not say, 'We have known you for years and we believe in you!' Why not say that instead of looking coldly on me. As I pass by they converse about me in whispers and are startled when I meet them."

"James Hardman has talked a great deal amongst them," said Mr. Malcolm slowly. "He has said some hard things of you."

"But my old friends," rejoined Darcy Lonsdale, "the people I have lived amongst so long, how can they believe such slander?"

"I am not much of a cynic, but this I must say, that I believe our misfortunes are not always displeasing even to those we call our friends."

"But these people have known me so long."

Mr. Lonsdale could think of nothing so strong as that—no argument was so potent. He had lived amongst them all his life. Why did they not trust him as he trusted them?

"If any one amongst them had come to me and had told me such a thing of another, I would not have credited it—and they are all too ready, it seems, to believe it of me. Malcolm, how in Heaven's name am I to go home and tell this to my wife? Am I to tell her that a blameless life, spent in the midst of people who have known me since I was a child, is no shield against slander?"

"I am very sorry for you," said George Malcolm; "I can say no more. I do not believe it, and I shall stand by you through it all."

The two men shook hands, but Darcy Lonsdale's face wore a puzzled, wondering look.

"Can it be a jest, do you think, Malcolm—a jest to try me?"

"No, it is no jest. Hardman will get the money if he can."

"I would not take it unless I thought it was really mine—I would refuse to touch it; but I cannot do that, for I am sure my old friend left it to me for the children. I must be just to them. Great Heavens, I have kept a blameless name all my life only to meet with this fact—to see my old friends point at me as a man who would cheat his client! I wish I had been dead before I had known this. Tell me what Hardman is going to do."

"He has placed the whole matter in the hands of a London firm, and the trial will come on about the end of September. You must prepare your defence and look up your witnesses."

"If my whole life does not witness for me," said Darcy Lonsdale, with quiet dignity, "then the words of no man can benefit me."

He dreaded going home—for the first time in his life he disliked passing through the streets of his native town; for the first time he shrank from the glances and words of his old comrades.

"Heaven help Kate!" he said to himself. "How am I to tell her?"

But Kate knew already—such news travels fast. It was no weeping, hysterical wife who clung to him, half mad with womanish fear; a bright, tender face looked into his, sweet, warm white hands clasped his, loving lips kissed him, a brave, bright voice cheered him with the music of home-words.

"I have heard all about it, Darcy," said his wife. "Never mind—no one can injure you. You are innocent, honest, and honorable. Never mind what any one says—Heaven know the truth, and I love you all the more that you bear this blame so well."

Darcy Lonsdale was relieved to find his wife so cheerful, and they sat down to discuss their difficulty.

"Give the money back again, Darcy," said his wife. "If I were in your place, I would not touch one shilling of it."

"If I did that, it would look as though I feared injury, as though I knew I had gained it by wrong means, and remorse compelled me to return it. It seems to me now that I am compelled, in justification of my own honor, to keep it. Mrs. Hardman certainly meant for me to have it. Then there are the children—I cannot rob them; I must not take from them what is really theirs."

"But," said his wife, "if there should be a trial, and it should go against you?"

"Then I must bear it like a man, Kate. I have had many blessings—if it pleases Heaven to send me a reverse, I must not complain."

But, for all that, she knew that his heart was sore and heavy, and that he was disturbed by a hundred doubts and fears. She soothed him, comforted him, and did her best to encourage him; but she could not persuade him to forget his troubles for a moment—it was always in his thoughts.

Presently Felix came in, and one glance at his son's face told Darcy Lonsdale that he had heard the whole story. The handsome young face was full of emotion. He went straight up to his father, and laid his hand lovingly upon his shoulder.

"Let me help you, father," he said. "No man shall say one word against you while I live."

And the two men—father and son—shook hands. There was more expressed in that silent grasp than there could have been in a volume of words.

"You have heard the story, I suppose, Felix?" said Mrs. Lonsdale.

"Yes, I have heard it, and a more cruelly unjust story never was told. Let me help to fight your battle, father. I should like to take every man who believes the story, or who affects to believe it, and thrash him."

"My dear Felix!" exclaimed gentle Mrs. Lonsdale.

"So I should, *madre*;" and the young handsome face deepened with angry scorn for every one who should harbor an evil thought of one so beloved. The love between father and son was almost pathetic in its intensity.

Presently Mrs. Lonsdale said musingly—

"What will Violet say when she hears it?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Cracked Tumbler.

CHAPTER I.

"Then, my dear Doctor," said the Squire, "you must excuse my suggesting that we should have a second opinion."

The doctor was John Fielding, of the parish of Dighton, in the county of Worcester. The squire was Mr. Lockwood of Dighton Honour (the great house of the locality) and the *then* with which the latter, so far inconsequently, commences the conversation referred to a declaration of the former, that upon his word of honor he did not know what on earth was the matter with her, meaning Miss Stella Lockwood, aged seventeen, the squire's eldest child by a dead wife.

The second Mrs. Lockwood was present at the consultation, and took a leading part in it; answered all the doctor's questions, and anxiously entered into every detail of the sick girl's case in the hope that she might help him to discover its cause, and prescribe for its cure.

It was a very peculiar case. Six months ago Stella Lockwood was the picture of physical health, and to all appearance as happy a girl as could be found in the shires. All of a sudden she lost her strength, her good looks, her good temper; became pale, nervous, and gloomy, and yet no recognisable disease showed itself. She ate well and slept well; there was nothing the matter with her digestive organs, or her lungs, or her brain. Her heart was in perfect order as a blood pump, and untouched by a malady with which "sweet seventeen" is sometimes afflicted. There was no consumption or decline in the family. Her father had not spent five pounds on doctors or druggists since he left college. Her mother was a strong and hearty woman until crippled by an accident, which will be hereafter recorded. There were no sins of the third or fourth generation, that any one knew of, likely to be visited upon the children of this; for the child is question sprang from long lived, prudent, and temperate stock on both sides. When, therefore, her father (who at first, man like, made light of his daughter's ailment and pooh-poohed his wife's fears) was at last driven to realise that there must be something wrong, and was honestly informed by his friend the doctor that upon his word and honor he did not know what on earth it was . . . he broke out with that *then* we have heard, and the desired second opinion was procured.

The second opinion came from a famous practitioner (from London), whose specialty was nerves, particularly female nerves, and who was by no means the sort of a man to say upon his word and honor he did not know what anything was. Another specialty was his smile. It was reproachful, saying, "Oh! why did you not send for me sooner?" . . . it was assuring, saying, "Lay aside all your anxieties now that I *am* here" . . . . It was complimentary, saying, "Yes, you suffer exactly what a person of your rank of life *ought* to suffer under the circumstances." He smilingly added a new-fashioned preparation of iron to Dr. Fielding's treatment, smilingly prescribed change of air and scene, and smilingly took his fifty guineas and his leave.

The new-fashioned preparation did not do Stella any good, and the change of scene did her actual harm. Nothing pleased her, nothing interested her. She was led through France, Switzerland, Italy like one in a trance. She pined and fretted for home, and home they had to bring her . . . acting under a third opinion . . . after an absence of six months, not one whit improved by her traveling, paler, more nervous and gloomy than ever. About this time, also, began a change in demeanor towards her step-mother which greatly distressed that lady, and a habit of seeking the society of her step-grandfather which astonished the world.

To explain this we must go back to the days of the first Mrs. Lockwood.

St. John Lockwood of Dighton Honor was left lord of himself at a very early age, and found his heritage anything but one of woe. Before he left Oxford it had been arranged by every one, but himself, that he should marry his old playmate and neighbour, Mabel Ravesy, and even in his own mind this was as much arranged as anything that entered that overcrowded and disorderly domain. The lady had her own consent, and more. She loved him deeply, tenderly, truly, and was in every way worthy of a steadier and better man. This was why the young squire's guardians favored an early marriage. . . . Mabel was a good, clever girl, and would manage him, they thought. Besides, what a mercy it would be for her, poor girl! to have a home of her own. From this it may be inferred that her surroundings were not irreproachable. Many a girl of her age, however, envied the maiden mistress of Claiborne Court. Colonel Ravesy was a widower of ten year's standing, a justice of the peace, a deputy-lieutenant, a steward of county races, a patron of county balls, a power in the Vehmic court which made and forced social laws at Salincham the county town, famous for its hunting, its scandal, and its "waters." The county shook its head, and sighed over the colonel's doings out of the county. The great world's favourite weekly newspapers frequently contained spicy little paragraphs concerning him. Still he held his own. It is so difficult to cashier a leader, once you have put him in command, and the lawn tennis, the archery, the balls, the theatricals, the cellar, and the cuisine of Claiborne Court were all *so* good, and the proprieties so carefully attended to at home, that Colonel and Miss Ravesy's invitations were rarely refused.

"Yes, my dear," materfamilias would say, "I think we shall go *this* time; but really, when Flora comes out ——." With a good many others, every time was to be the last time, and so indeed it was, till the next. During the winter, when St. John Lockwood came of age, Claiborne Court outshone itself. "Where the —— deer the money come from?" men asked each other.

Shortly after the last of these galeties, St. John went up to London to see a fellow off who was going abroad. The next thing heard of him was that he had gone abroad himself, and the next, that he was married! On a certain Monday night in Vienna, he said to himself in the glass as he undid his collar, "Threw herself at my head, by Jove!" and was elated. By the following Wednesday he found out that the object of this remark threw herself at people's hearts, not their heads, and was horribly jealous. On the Saturday he threw himself and his fortune at her feet, and was made very happy. She was an American, one of those bright, beautiful, hearty girls who dance through their youth to the music of their own happiness. Impulsive as he was, and as much in love, she saw no reason why they should not be married "right away." And married right away they were.

This was a heavy blow to Mabel, rendered more hard to bear by her father's conduct. He was furious; denounced Lockwood as a scoundrel, and poor Mabel as a "—— little fool." Why had she not played her cards better? Why had she put him (her parent) to all that expense and let the prize slip through her fingers after all? He had been borrowing money right and left upon the strength of the marriage, for which he had been scheming, and the news from Vienna brought a swarm of indignant creditors round his ears.

When the happy pair came to live at Dighton Honor, there were, of course, plenty of good-natured friends to tell the bride of Mabel Ravesy's "disappointment," and to warn her against "that dreadful man the Colonel." The Colonel had been obliged to let Claiborne Court and to move into a modest cottage over somewhat nearer Dighton. He was not enabled to entertain now, so no one called upon him. Mr. Lockwood was, however, too careless, and his wife too wise, to follow what was pointed out to them as the proper course. The one sought the Colonel (who found it expedient to hide his feelings) as much as ever, and the other made a prime favorite of the Colonel's daughter. At first there was more of the wisdom of the serpent (on the married lady's side) than the softness of the dove in this arrangement.

"I'll let them see," she said to herself, "that I'm not afraid of her, and I'll make him feel that I trust him."

This, perhaps, was somewhat risky with a man of Lockwood's temperament, but it answered its purpose. All went well; little Stella was born, and the squire under the management of his clever wife had settled down in a steady-going country gentleman; when that accident, already foreshadowed, took place. He had been called to London on business, which was to detain him some ten days. On the morning of the seventh he telegraphed his delighted wife, *"All done. Meet me by the 2.50 train.*

Owing to some delays, the message did not reach the Honor till past two o'clock, and the station was a good half hour's drive away. Mr. Lockwood's pony-carriage happened to be at the door for another service. By making a short cut over the grass of the park she could still catch the train. In she sprang, and off went the high-spirited little nags at a hard gallop. When the roughest of the drive was over, and only a hundred yards of the level turf separated their excited driver from the main road, one of them put his foot in a rabbit-hole, fell, tripped up his mate and overset the carriage.

The beautiful Mrs. Lockwood never sat upright again.

"I wished it had killed me outright, Mabel," she said one day. "I am no companion for him now, poor fellow! and he feels it. No more drives with him to the meet, no more scampers over autumn fields with the luncheon-basket. Yes," she added to herself, with a long-drawn sigh, "if it were not for Stella——"

Mabel Ravesy hardly ever left her, so as a matter of propriety the dreadful Colonel, who had no home now, as his creditors had swallowed up the cottage *ornée*, took up his quarters at the Honor, and brought with him the last remaining member of his once numerous household as a sort of companion to Mabel, and an assistant nurse for the afflicted lady of the house. This person had been housekeeper at Claiborne Court, and was a model of that combination of dignity and respectfulness which is so valued in an upper servant. She might have been mistaken for a duchess as she swept along the hall in plain, rich black silk to take the orders for the day . . . she stood before her young mistress meeker than the last arrived dairymaid. She gave quite a character to the house. "If half the stories about him (the dreadful Colonel) are true" friends of his prosperous days would say, "Mrs. Kirkman would not be there." Strong, firm, quiet, she made an excellent nurse, so far as mechanical success went, but for tenderness or sympathy one might as well have searched the nether millstone.

Mrs. Lockwood lived, or rather suffered life for two years; and then the end came, unexpectedly. She was found dead in her bed, with little more than the usual wring of pain on her once happy face.

We all know how trifles will be magnified under the shadow of a great sorrow. There were upbraidings and tears in the servants' hall that day, over—*a lemon pip!* Like all invalids, Mrs. Lockwood had her fancies and dislikes, and one of them was against pips in her lemonade. They made it bitter, she said. The glass from which she drank during the night was found overturned, and a small piece chipped out of its rim by its fall against the jug: a portion of its contents soaked the table cloth, in removing which Mrs. Markby, the housekeeper, found that one pip—stranded.

"I shouldn't sleep for a month, Mary Jane," said the good woman, reproachfully. "If I could think that the last thing I did for the dear lady was done careless."

"I'll take my bible oath, Mrs. Markby," sobbed the inculpated kitchen-maid, "that I strained it."

"If you had strained it," persisted the accuser, "there couldn't have been any pip."

In this calamity the dreadful Colonel made himself extremely useful, and increased the hold he had obtained over the widower. He made the arrangements for the funeral, and relieved the mourner of all those petty troubles which grate so upon grief. When the proprieties would no longer permit his daughter to remain at the Honor, he took her to London, and reappeared in good feather at several of his old haunts. To London, and afterwards to Scarborough, St. John Lockwood followed them, before the year was out . . . the Honor was *so* lonely, he said. The Colonel was glad to hear that his former housekeeper, Mrs. Kirkman, had been provided for. She was now keeping a school at Dighton and doing well.

* * * * * * *

As every one expected, Mabel Ravesy became the second Mrs. Lockwood. Thrown so much together as she and little Stella had been there was no shock for the child. Little to forget and nothing to learn, the old associations blended into the new relationship very happily. Mabel was the pink and pearl of step mothers. "Wait till she has children of her own," said Malice. In due time she had children of her own, but still the motherless child was best, and first and dearest. So her kind critics veered round, and were shocked at such injustice to her own flesh and blood. It was ridiculous, some of them assured each other, to behold how Stella was spoiled. Her step mother appeared to be afraid of the child; others shook their heads and declared there must be some cause for it . . . meaning, of course, a bad one. I notice that whenever the uncharitable cannot put a finger, moral or physical, on the cause of what they do not understand, and consequently dislike, they wag the tops of their bodies and groan that a bad one must exist. There was no bad cause for it, it might have been so without any cause at all, for Mabel had a big warm heart; but it did so happen that about a month before the first Mrs. Lockwood died she took her kind nurse's hand, and whispered (as though in continuation of something that had passed through her mind unspoken), "You will take my place with Stella, too, dear, won't you?"

The time came when the love which Mabel bore the child for its own sake, and the affection created by that tender trust, underwent a change. Fear stole in. The gossips were right: she became afraid of her husband's daughter.

CHAPTER II.

I have said that upon her return from that fruitless continental tour, a change came over Stella Lockwood's demeanor to her stepmother which greatly distressed that lady, and a habit of seeking the society of her step-grandfather, which astonished the whole household. By this time the dreadful Colonel had fallen into very bad ways. When his daughter was married, strangers took him for the bridegroom, so young and chirpy did he look; before three years were over he broke down into an old man, with nothing lovely in the marks which time had stamped upon him. As a child, little Stella was afraid of him; as a girl they merely met, though he had taken up his quarters permanently at the Honor. As a young woman she did what few others cared to do—boarded him in his den, where he sat smoking the strongest tobacco, drinking cold gin and water, and muttering to himself. The only visitor he tolerated was his late housekeeper, Mrs. Kirkman, who came every Sunday and remained with him just one hour. Then she called on Mrs. Markby, had a glass of sherry and a biscuit with that lady in her sanctum, and took her leave. Routine and punctuality were characteristics of the still handsome and dignified Mrs. Kirkman. The Colonel had become negligent as regards his person, profane in his language, and was almost always fuddled with drink—not an attractive companion for any one, much less for a nervous girl of seventeen. Nevertheless Stella would seat herself at the other side of the table at which he sat pretending to read, and watch him with her face resting on her hands. "Oh, dear Miss Stella," the servants would exclaim, "don't pray go in, he'll hurt you sure." And the warning was not without cause, for the Colonel found charms in his solitude, and had been known to hurl bottles (empty ones), and even chairs, at such as intruded upon it.

"No, he will not hurt me," Stella would reply, in the firm but abstracted tone which had grown into her voice; and he did not. He would stamp and scream at her as she sat watching him, swear awful oaths and threaten wildly—but he never touched her. When he locked his door to keep her out, she would go round to the window and watch him through the glass. For his den was on the ground floor, so chosen because his heart was affected, and going up and down stairs was bad for him. If he closed the shutters in her face, Stella would still stand her ground, as though no obstacle impeded her sight, and it always ended by his letting her in. "—— you, it's worse to know that you are there than to see your cursed face," he would cry—"come in."

She seldom spoke; when she did it was always about her mother. Sometimes he would cry and plead piteously to be left alone. If she would only go away now, she might come and stay all day to-morrow. She paid no attention to what he said. If she were in a talking mood she went on, irrespective of what he replied. If in a silent one, nothing what he said appeared to move her. Once he kept his bed in the next room for nearly a week to avoid her; but she came, all the same, evening after evening, and sat herself opposite his empty chair, till he surrendered.

This conduct of Stella's was all the more strange because she had herself fallen into long spells of silence and affected solitude. She withdrew almost entirely from the society of her father and her step mother. When—acting under further advice from the famous "nerves" man—cheerful young girls of her own age were invited to the Honor, she was barely civil to them, and of course they took the hint and did not repeat their visits. She would sit alone for hours in the room where her mother died, and in the twilight would wander about the great house, exploring lumber rooms and attics, returning with her dress torn with the nails and grimy with dust. Only one short year before she was the neatest of the neat.

You may be sure that this did not pass unrebuked.

"I dare say you mean it kindly, dear," Mrs. Lockwood said soon after these fancies had developed themselves, "but really you do your poor grandfather harm. He is in a very nervous state and begs to be left alone."

"Does he?" replied Stella, dreamily.

"Yes. And Dr. Fletcher will tell you that it is the best thing for him. He is very much shaken, and the least excitement is bad for him; your father understands this and never goes near him. I only go occasionally, to see that he is comfortable. Now oblige me, my darling, by not going again."

"I must go."

"But why? It can be no pleasure to you."

"I must go."

"This is childish," said Mrs. Lockwood, getting vexed. "I tell you there is no occasion for you to go; you do him harm by going. I will not allow my father to be annoyed by any one. If you knew what trouble he has had, poor man, you would be more considerate. Now, Stella (finding that the girl's face was hardening), you know that I never deny you anything that is good for you, do please me this once, promise never to go again."

"I will try not to go."

"Try, nonsense! As I said before, it can be no pleasure to you; your curiosity is satisfied by this time, I should think. You speak as though I had asked you to make some sacrifice. Besides," she went on, meeting with no response, "Dr. Fletcher says it is bad for *you* also. You are in a highly nervous state yourself, and the sight of a person afflicted, as is my poor father, must injuriously affect you. Do not force me to exert my authority and absolutely forbid you, Stella."

"No," said the girl, "I would rather that you did not forbid me."

"That is my own Stella." Mrs. Lockwood thought she had gained her point, and tried to seal it with a kiss, but the girl turned away her face.

"Stella!" she almost sobbed, "will you not kiss me?"

"I do not know."

"Are you vexed with me for what I have said?"

"No."

"Oh, Stella, you do not love me!"

"I see my own mother so often now," said the girl, with lowered eyelids, "that —that——"

"See your own mother!" gasped Mrs. Lockwood.

"In my dreams, I suppose; but I will try and please you, I will try, indeed."

For some time she did not go near the Colonel's den, or even visit that part of the garden into which its windows opened. But gradually the circle of her wanderings narrowed; she would not (or could not) avoid that side of the house—she could not avoid the path which led to the forbidden ground—she passed the window slowly and more slowly, and at last could not resist stopping at it and looking within. Then she went in the same as before.

What was to be done? All the doctors agreed that in her present state of health she was not to be thwarted. At the same time they insisted that she must be kept away from the Colonel—for both their sakes. Persuasion, command and entreaty were employed in vain. "You see," she would reply, without a shade of obstinacy or defiance, "I must go."

One evening a piercing shriek was heard in the den. None of the servants dared enter it. Mrs. Lockwood was sent for and found the Colonel in a fit on the floor.

"Cruel child," she cried; "he is dead—you have killed him."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BRIC-A-BRAC.

EXPOSURE OF THE BRAIN.—A case is on record of a woman whose brain was exposed, in consequence of the removal of a considerable portion of its bony covering by disease. It was said pressure on the brain suspended all feelings and all intellect, which were instantly restored when the pressure was withdrawn.

ANTIQUITY OF BELL-RINGING.—When bell ringing first arose cannot readily be ascertained. It said that bells were invented by Paulinus, bishop of Nola, Italy, at the commencement of the fifth century. In 680, according to Venerable Bede, they were used in Brittany, France, and thence, perhaps brought into England.

THE FLAVOR OF CIGARS.—In adulterating tobacco and cigars the flavor is varied to suit the most diverse tastes, but the usual object seems to be to impart to it a pleasing sweetness of tone. Accordingly saccharine matter, and especially treacle, is very largely pressed into the service. For those who like a rather more decided taste, licorice, salt, logwood, glycerine and aniseed are used.

THE HIGH HATS.—The French revolution is said to have brought in the horrible stove-pipe hat, which is of all head-coverings the most inconvenient and disagreeable, and which has had the longest reign of any sort of head gear. It would be satisfactory to hear one good reason given for the attachment of mankind to this ugly, inconvenient, hot, tight hat, but none has ever been given.

A SINGULAR FEATURE.—A singular feature between the marine landscapes between Terra del Fuego, in South America, and the contiguous mainland is the floating gardens of seaweed. The plat frequently grows to a length of between 300 and 400 feet. It gives cover and pasturage to every species of shell-fish, great and small, while the intertangled mass, swaying like a ponderous curtain in the water, effectually breaks the shock of the most tremendous rollers.

SAILING CARS.—Wind vehicles, fitted with sails, masts, etc., are now in use on the long stretches of tracks which extend over the western prairies, and the speed rivals that of the fast express. They are employed to convey repairing parties to pumps, telegraph lines, etc., along the route. They are, of course, exceedingly cheap to construct and maintain, and save the labor involved in running a hand-car.

IN the middle of the eighteenth century French philosophy penetrated into the cabinet of Catherine II., of Russia. The grand seigneurs and ladies of her voluptuous court coquetted with the ideas of liberalism and classic humanism; consequently the world had to be told that Constantinople ought to become a Muscovite field, because the republics of ancient Hellas must be re-established under Russian protection. But philosophy and classicism got out of fashion at St. Petersburg when the revolutionary storm thundered in France. The old dictum was therefore reproduced that Stamboul cannot remain under Ottoman dominion, because the fainéant Turk is a disgrace to the Holy City from whence Russia received the light of Christianity, and also because "the Turk is a sick man." Let us add that this medical dictum is a traditional one already in vogue at the time of Catherine II., who was indebted for it to the wit of Voltaire.

PEARLS.—Of all articles of luxury and ostentation known to the Romans, pearls seem to have been the most esteemed. They were worn on all parts of the dress, and such was the diversity of their size, purity and value, that they were found to suit all classes, from those of moderate to those of the most colossal fortune. The famous pearl earrings of Cleopatra are said to be worth about $800,000, and Julius Cæsar is said to have presented Servilia, the mother of Brutus, with a pearl for which he had paid above $240,000, and though no reasonable doubt can be ascertained in regard to the extreme exaggeration of these and similar statements, the fact that the largest and finest pearls brought immense prices is beyond al question. It has been said that the wish to become master of the pearls with which it was supposed to abound, was one of the motives which induced Julius Cæsar to invade Britain. But, though a good many were met with in various parts of the country, they were of little or no value, being small and ill-colored. After pearls and diamonds, the emerald held the highest place in the estimation of the Romans.

NEWS OF INTEREST

Tin was one of the earliest metals known.

Nearly all of Michigan's best wheat goes to France.

Coffee is successfully cultivated in San Diego, Cal.

The Congressmen to be chosen this Fall number 228.

Lots of snow and sliding is promised us next winter.

Throughout the world 7,000,000 Jews are scattered.

Australia's gold yield has been declining for years.

There is a $25 fine for hunting on Sunday in this State

Drunkenness is fearfully on the increase among young men.

Reading, Pa., is beginning to furnish England with iron.

Lightning travels nearly a million times faster than thunder.

Fruit culture is making rapid progress in the United States.

Making photographic impressions upon silk is a new industry.

Paris has twelve large establishments for making glass eyes.

A bonnet reversible is an achievement in millinery architecture.

Letter paper with the day of the week printed on it is the latest.

The frequency of colliery explosions in Great Britain is appalling.

There are fewer Chinamen in this country now than five years ago.

Queen Victoria likes to travel by night. She suffers little from fatigue.

The French author Victor Hugo has a writing chamber on the roof of his house.

The heat given off by the sun would melt 267,200,000 cubic miles of ice every second.

Indian maidens on the Northern Nebraska Reservation have begun to carry parasols.

A five-year-old child in Indiana tried to commit suicide in order to see her dead mother.

The military authorities of Germany have introduced a telephone drill into the army.

Pope Leo XIII. is an enthusiastic amateur in music, and is able to sing mass with due effect.

The new fashionable shade is called lees of wine. It is used in combinations of satin with velvet.

Bucks county, Pa., does not have a criminal dock. The prisoners sit in the bar with the lawyers.

Since the modern improvements in machinery, 1,600,000 men do as much as 9,000,000 did formerly.

During 1877, 1175 persons were killed, and 3706 injured, by railroad accidents in Great Britain.

An Ohio lady's glossy black hair turned white as snow when she saw a snake in the path before her.

A thief at Sumunit, Miss., stole the spade left at a grave awaiting the coming of the funeral procession.

It costs as much to bury a man decently in New York as to live six months in the style in London.

It is said that the African explorer Stanley's name is P. Brodigan, and that he was born in Ireland.

The exports of the United States were greater in 1877 and 1878 by hundreds of millions, than our imports.

With the thermometer at 30 degrees below zero, the sensation of cold is indistinguishable from that of heat.

Lord Beaconsfield's physician, who was summoned from London to Berlin during the congress, has presented a bill for $3500.

The rumor of a contemplated marriage between King Alfonso of Spain and a sister of the late Queen Mercedes is semi-officially denied at Madrid.

Lady Caroline Norton left $500 by her will to "the good cause of woman suffrage," and Mrs. George Oakes, another Englishwoman, has lately contributed $500 to the same cause.

The report is that in some cases telegraphic messages from the infected fever districts have been refused in the South, for fear that through some mysterious agency of the wires the yellow scourge may be propagated.

The man who invented shoes with the French heel did it to avenge an injury done him by a handsome woman. She jilted him, and since then his hatred of the sex has really no bounds.

Wife (anxiously): What did that young lady observe who passed us just now? Husband (with a smile of calm delight): Why, my love, she observed rather a good-looking man walking with quite an elderly female—that's all.

"The Loveliest of her Sex"

would not be so considered were she minus that peerless charm, a pure and fresh complexion. The most exquisitely moulded features, the most graceful figure, the most luxuriant tresses, lose half their effect if not accompanied by that grand essential of beauty. Bear this in mind, ladies, and lose no time in securing it by the use of LAIRD'S BLOOM OF YOUTH, which will assuredly mend every complexional defect and establish that delicate purity and softness of the skin which is so desirable.

I'LL DREAM, LOVE, OF THEE.

BY MRS. MARY S. KEIM.

I'm dreaming, my darling—
I'm dreaming of thee,
When sleeping or waking,
By land or by sea;
When darkness and sorrow
May come unto me,
To brighten the shadows,
I'll dream, love, of thee.

As a bird of the springtime
Conceals in her breast,
When soaring away to
Her leaf-hidden nest,
The song that so sweetly
She sings from the tree,
I dream of my darling—
I dream, love, of thee.

Sometimes in my dreaming,
Beside thee I stand;
I feel the soft touch of
Your lily-pure hand;
And, glory surpassing,
The blue of the skies
Illumines my soul from
Your heavenly eyes.

And thus while your kisses
Are tender and sweet,
With passionate pleading
I bow at thy feet;
The answer of fate that
Your lips would conceal,
Your smiles and your blushes
Can only reveal.

In some fairy bower,
In sweet summer time,
I know I shall claim thee
Forever as mine.
Till then, through life toiling
My pleasure shall be
To dream of my darling—
To dream, love, of thee.

ON DANGEROUS GROUND:

—OR—

AGATHA'S FRIENDSHIP

A Romance of American Society.

BY MRS. BLOOMFIELD MOORE.

"It is from the great book of Nature, the same through a thousand editions, whether of black-letter or wire-wove and hot-pressed, that I have venturously essayed to read a chapter to the public."

PART III.

CHAPTER VI.—[CONTINUED.]

"I do not understand how all this came about," said Mr. Lee, looking thoroughly bewildered.

"Neither do I, answered Agatha. "I did not intend to marry him, but when Aunt Hester told me that he was dead, I found out what life would be without him; and when his letter came, the next day, I was able to see that the path of our united happiness was also the path of my duty. At first, I refused to be his wife because I thought it was right for me to refuse. I have accepted him now, because I know I am right in so doing; and, papa, you must give me your blessing."

"I most certainly will give you my blessing, child, but I shall never be able to understand how you could refuse Ormus Davenport for such a man as Carroll Tracey. Ah, well! the boy-god is blind; there's no doubt about it."

"The heart is a river, and flows where it will,' Lamartine tells us," rejoined Agatha. "But I am sure you would rather see me the happiest of women, as Carroll Tracey's wife, than the most wretched of mortals, as I would be did I marry any man, even were he a king, who did not possess every iota of my heart; and Carroll is a king among men in my eyes. The lesson of Mrs. Atherton's marriage is not one I wish to learn by experience. If ever a woman repented selling herself for money, she does. She finds no companionship, no sympathy, intellectually or physically, in her husband; I have seen the look of loathing in her eyes when he approaches her, for she is one of those highly-strung and sensitive nervous organisations that is not mere passive indifference. The very thought of being chained in such a way, or giving myself as absolute property, without reserve, makes me shudder."

For a few moments Mr. Lee remained thoughtfully silent; then he said:

"After all you are right, my child; quite right. Mr. Tracey is on this side, I believe; when is he going to join you?"

"No, he is still in America; but has written to ask when he may come to us. I prefer that he should wait until next year. He will then have been divorced two years, and it will be a year since Mildred died; and my own sense of what is right and proper will be satisfied, and Mrs. Grundy will have less to say than were he to join us now."

"Quite right, my dear, quite right; I agree with you entirely. When do Miss Lennox and Colone Potten expect to get married?"

"On our return to Rome. Everything is arranged: you are to give the bride away; I am to be first bridesmaid; and there is to be a grand wedding breakfast; then they are to start off for the North Pole, or some place in its vicinity, where the midnight sun is to be seen; and we are going to go to Venice, you know; and then, if you and Aunt Hester are willing, I would like to go by Trieste, Vienna, and Warsaw, into Russia."

"I am quite ready, and your aunt thinks only of your wishes; so you will have it all your own way, as you always do. Where are the Athertons going?"

"They wish to go over the Italian lakes, to Venice with us; then they will return to Verona, and go through the Tyrol and the Engadine, I believe. Mrs. Atherton made a dreadful speech the other day. I should think she must be out of her mind to say anything so wanting in refinement Mr. Jenkins was asking what our plans were; when I told him we were going to Venice he turned to her, and, lifting his eyebrows, said: 'And where are you going, Mrs. Atherton?' She answered, 'I am going to the de'il,' using the stronger word, however."

"Hum! marriage without love must be a hell on earth for a woman of great sensibility."

They both had occasion in after days to recall Mrs. Atherton's words.

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. ATHERTON DISAPPEARS. AGATHA AND CARROLL TRACEY LEARN THAT VIRTUE BRINGS ITS OWN REWARD.

Why should any of us be prod to have been sheltered from temptation? There is only one thing that can make pride worthy,—to have been tempted and conquered.—*Mrs. Forrester.*

The marriage of Colonel Potten and Miss Lennox took place at Rome. Mr. Clawson made a speech at the wedding breakfast, which Mr. Jenkins declared was made up from Murray's guide-book for Central Italy, and "Roba di Roma;" stating boldly that the only part of it that was original was the bad French phrases with which it abounded. Within the week that followed the departure of the bride and groom, all were on their way to their various destinations.

The summer passed pleasantly but slowly to Agatha; the days seemed endless and she often thought of Carroll Tracey's wish that he could go to sleep and not waken until the day of their meeting should arrive; yet each day brought some new pleasure in the way of sight-seeing, and not a week passed that did not bring her letters that were so full of tenderness that she scarcely knew whether they did not make her long for him more than they helped her to bear his absence. Mr. Lee and his sister had particularly wished to stay longer in the quaint old city of Moscow, but Agatha had hurried them back to St. Petersburg, where she found the letters she had expected awaiting them at the banker's. Never had she received a letter from him more precious than the one of latest date; she carried it with her, next to her heart, when they took their afternoon drive over the broad grand streets, past buildings superbly magnificent, into the green country where the roads were bordered with villas, with endless flower beds, and fountains flashing in the sun's setting rays; on, on, still on, under avenues of trees, to the borders of the sea, where the occupants of the carriage alight, pacing the sands, or chattering in groups under the broad spreading trees. Mr. Lee and Aunt Hester left the carriage, but Agatha remained; she was in no mood for talking. She felt borne up, on angel's wings as it were, into Paradise—that paradise of love, which no other can surpass, in the rapture that comes to those whose souls are mated and interlocked as they walk its streets of pearl and gold together. What if, in time, the pearl grows less opalescent, the gold becomes dim?—it is still gold, it is still pearl, and though time may sully, eternity will renew its brightness.

Agatha drew her letter from its hiding place next to her heart, and read the sweet lines, the vaporous golden atmosphere intensifying the beauty of the sea, earth, and sky, while every now and then she glanced around to take it all in, in full measure, for her spirits were in harmony with all. And these were the lines that she dwelt oftenest upon.

"Never were days so long as these; how can I wait through months of such days, then? Be merciful, my darling, and let me come to you sooner. Every morning I count the days that remain, every night I go to sleep thinking how we will first meet. Have you the dress you wore when we parted last, and which I kissed when we parted? I imagine you with that dress on, coming to meet me; and over and over I fancy how I will take you in my arms and cover you with kisses. I never knew how to wait; and now I know less that ever. I wish at least autumn were here; above all, I wish that your travel were ended, and that you were settled down, where I would not be tortured by the fear of some accident happening to you. I want you more and more every day. When once you are my wife, darling, I will be exacting; you must always stay where I can see you—so near, that I can touch you as I write, to repay me for this cruel waiting. I cannot live without you any more. To some people the absence of those dear to them is hard to bear in the beginning, but time brings them patience. Not so with me. I was more resigned at first, but every day increases my impatience and my longing. It is useless to try to divert my mind. I try to write more than usual, to read as much as possible, to take longer rides, even to go a little more into society; it is all useless. Through everything I am constantly repeating to myself:

The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves my heart in hers—

and your eyes are following me everywhere. Those dear, adored eyes! how can you have the heart to keep me an exile from their tender light? Were there ever such eyes on earth before as yours? How they haunt me! No; such eyes, I often fear, belong to heaven only, and what agony lies in the thought! Do you remember our first parting? How dear we were to each other then, and now are we not ten thousand times dearer? I have the photograph of yourself that you sent me, but I dare not look at it as often as I would, for it only increases my intense longing to hold you to my heart * * You must be tired to hear always the same things repeated over and over again; but I cannot help it. Can I change my words when my heart is filled to overflowing with the same thoughts? It is a necessity for me to write to you, even if I do repeat what you know quite as well as I know. It is not for you that I write as much as it is for myself. Next to seeing you is writing to you, and receiving your letters. Would that they would come to me a little oftener! Never will you know what I suffer in this separation."

Letters like these were the angels that bore Agatha up above the earth, and each letter that arrived did but make her long for his presence more. When they left St. Petersburg they made the passage across the Baltic, so enchanting with its numerous islands, stopping at the little towns in Finland, and reaching Stockholm in a humor to be pleased with everything. But here, as everywhere, Agatha's thoughts followed her soul, and nothing that was beautiful in nature or in art did she see that she did not long for Carroll to enjoy it with her. Their daily drives lay through grand old evergreen forests, carpeted with tufted green moss and crowded at intervals with rocks that were matted with the same soft, rich, velvety verdure. The park with its extended grounds, the largest that Europe boasts, was their favorite resort; and where in the world is there in pleasure grounds a drive to equal in its wild beauty that of Queen Christina's Way? Ulricksdale, Drottningholm, Skokloster, Gripsholm Castle, at the further end of the beautiful Lake Malar, together with many other points of interest, were at last visited; and then they went out of their way to visit the picturesque falls of Trollhatten, returning to go into Norway, where some weeks were passed in various excursions to its most beautiful fiords,—to the Romsdaler, and over the Dovrefjeld to Drontheim. Then coming back to Bergen, they took the steamer down that wild coast, so unlike any other, with its lovely fiords girded with rocky ramparts of every conceivable form and variety. Arrived at Copenhagen, they passed several days in the quaint old city; and then, by Hamburg and Cologne, they kept on their way back to Italy, stopping a few days at some of the most interesting places on the route. After leaving Cologne, they received no letters until they reached Florence. Here, a large package was awaiting them, and now they learned of the mysterious disappearance of Mrs. Atherton in Paris. She had been thrown from her horse, in crossing one of the passes in Switzerland, and at the time her physician had feared some injury to her brain, but she had apparently recovered, and had reached Paris seemingly in good health. The very night of her arrival she had told her maid that she did not need her services that night, and had last been seen by her sitting at her toilet-table in her bed-room. Mr. Atherton had retired earlier to his own chamber, and did not know until the following morning that his wife had not even laid her head upon her pillow. All her trunks and satchels were found untouched; not even her hat or her mantle was missing. Her purse, filled with gold coin, lay upon her dressing-table. They could suppose nothing but that she had walked out of the house in a state of mental aberration, and possibly, as the distressed husband feared, jumped into the Seine. Mr. Atherton telegraphed for his relative, Mr. Clawson, who was in Switzerland; and upon his arrival no effort was spared to obtain some trace of the missing woman—some clue to her whereabouts, if she were still living; for Mr. Clawson stated that upon several occasions she had spoken to him of her intention to enter a convent. The secret police were on the alert, rewards were offered, the Morgue was visited daily; but weeks rolled away, and no tidings came of Mrs. Atherton. Mr. Jenkins had parted from them upon their arrival, and left at once for Havre, to sail for America. This was the information contained in one of Mrs Potten's letters to Agatha; and she, with her aunt and father, was lost in conjectures as to the mystery. Had Mrs. Atherton's mind really been injured by her fall, causing her to stray away and lose herself in that Babylon of a city? or had she from sheer weariness of life put an end to her existence?

"After all, Agatha, there is nothing like love to make life desirable. I am glad that you insisted upon having your own will; you always managed to have it in some way. I remember, when you were about as high as this table, you used to say: 'I would rather not, if you please,' which with you meant, to all intents and purposes, 'I won't!'"

"Is it not much better to have a mind of your own than to be turned around by every wind that blows, like a weather-vane?" asked Agatha.

"Certainly it is; but what would you do, when you have a husband, whose will must be law? You will have to promise to love, honor, and obey, you know."

"I am going to marry a man whom I trust to implicitly that I know he will never require any obedience from me that I cannot render with my whole heart. I do not believe in a love that makes reservations and refuses to yield the obedience which both divine and human law require."

Mr. Lee laughed heartily.

"All this sounds very heroic; but wait until you have been married a year or two, and then tell me your opinion. It is a great mistake to make the women all promise to obey, for it is the man who does all the obeying. The weaker sex have a wonderful faculty for becoming the stronger sex in matrimonial alliances. But from whom are your other letters?"

"There are several from Carroll, and one from Mr. Jenkins, who wrote just before sailing. How very strange that he should have written to me!"

"What does he say?"

"He comments upon Mrs. Atherton's disappearance as coolly as if he had not been the devoted cavalier that we have seen he was. He thinks she had been 'queer' for some time, and suggests that she may have entered a convent, as she once said she intended to become a Roman Catholic. He adds that he hopes to return to Europe soon, and may possibly meet us here this winter.

"And what does Mr. Tracey write?"

"Oh, as usual, he scolds over this long separation; and says a great deal what I like to read, but which you would skip if you had the reading of the letters. The last was written October 1st, almost one month ago, and I cannot understand why there are none of later date."

Meantime, Aunt Hester, who had also received letters, had left the room, looking in once to say: "Are you quite sure we will remain here through the month of November?"

"Quite sure," replied Mr. Lee, "and not one day longer. I remember what December is in Florence, and have no wish to pass such another cold month here. Why did you ask, Hester?"

"Only for information," closing the door quickly, as though she wished to avoid further questioning.

When dinner was served, Aunt Hester was not to be found. She had apparently disappeared as mysteriously as Mrs. Atherton; but not as alarming a disappearance, as her maid had disappeared with her.

When she joined them at last at the dinner-table, looking just the least flushed, Agatha at once asked her where she had been, to which question Aunt Hester replied that she had been to post an important letter.

"It is plainly to be seen that Aunt Hester has an affair of her own on hand," said Agatha.

Aunt Hester smiled and looked wise, but said nothing.

How lovely Florence was in the ripe, rich beauty of those autumn days! Still, Agatha was not as happy as she had been, for day followed day, and no letter came from Carroll Tracey. What could his silence mean? She grew hourly more and more anxious. One evening, when her father had gone to the club, and her aunt had been called from the room, Agatha took her box of letters in her lap, and opening one after another, read passages here and there, hoping to make the pain at her heart less.

"Reading old letters?" said Aunt Hester, when she returned.

"Yes, for the want of any new ones to read. Aunt Hester, do you think he can be on his way? for I am sure he would not allow weeks to pass without writing to me if he were not, unless he is ill. I am getting so nervous that I think I will send a telegram if the steamer does not bring me a letter this week. What do you think, Aunt Hester?

"I think you will soon hear from him I would not be in the least surprised to see him walk in at any moment. A man's patience will not hold out for ever, and perhaps he is on his way. But you would be very angry with him, would you not, if he were to come before the year was out?"

"Angry with him? I would be enchanted with him. I really did mean a year when I said so; but there has not been one day in these ten that have passed since we came here that I have wished he would come this autumn. If he only would!"

Aunt Hester, who had remained standing, seemed to be watching the door nervously, and just as Agatha finished speaking it was opened by Stephano, their servant, who brought in a card.

As Agatha took it from the salver, she said, "I gave you orders not to admit anyone."

"It was my fault," said Aunt Hester, disappearing from the room.

Agatha never knew what she had said to the servant which caused him to return and show the owner of the card into the sitting-room, for all was blank to her from the instant in which her eyes fell upon the name to the moment in which she felt herself held in a speechless embrace in Carroll Tracey's arms, their very souls thrilling with the rapture of that long clinging kiss. Aunt Hester, who had received a letter from him of later date than those Agatha found awaiting her in Florence, had at once answered it, to his London address, that he might find it there upon landing, and know where to join them. She had been called out to see him before his entrance, and had returned to prepare the way for him. Now she had the good sense to leave them to the enjoyment of such hours of bliss as come only to those who, after sacrifices for duty, are at last able to speak heart to heart, and soul to soul, without reservation, or fear of violating any of the laws of God or man. The fulness, the completeness of such love as had drawn them together rarely comes to mortals; but in the immortal world may not all hope to be sharers in the wonderful revelations that are unfolded even here to those who love as did Agatha and Carroll Tracey?—such love as they feel who know what it is to live moments in which they "have no need of their perishable bodies, the spirits within standing face to face with each other, as purely spirit as in the eternal state."

CONCLUSION.

Consider all thy actions and take heed.
On stolen fruit though it is sweet to feed
Sin, like a bee, unto th; hive may bring
A little honey, but expect the sting.
Watkins.

Virtue is a service a man owes himself, and though there were no heaven nor any God to rule the world, it were not less the binding law of life. It is man's privilege to know the right and follow it.
—From the Hindu Scriptures.

The following spring, when the cactus hedges were in bloom, and orange groves gave out their rich draughts of sweetness, Agatha and Carroll Tracey were married at Naples, and went to Villa Belvidere at Sorrento to stay a month before going to Switzerland to join Mr. Lee and Aunt Hester.

"If language cannot translate all that is seen and felt in the sky, the earth, and the air," by the ordinary travellers in Italy, what must those glorious, golden days, the bewitching brilliant nights of that enchanting clime, have brought to two hearts so sensitive to all impressions of beauty as were Agatha's and her husband's?

The Villa Belvidere stands some distance back from the bay, upon an acclivity in the lovely plain of Sorrento, surrounded by groves of orange and citron, laden with their golden fruit and creamy perfumed blossoms. Everywhere vines flourish and flowers bloom, the soft grey foliage of the olive tree harmonising, yet toning down, the brighter hues. The branch of the Apennines whose hills cradle this charming plain, terminates at one end in a rocky cliff bordering the sea, while the other slopes gently down to the water's edge. Everywhere nature, with prodigal hand, has spread scenes of majestic beauty and of picturesque grandeur. Rocky mountain gorges stretch upwards to wooded heights; sparkling streams flash downwards to the sea, whose surface now flashes like a floor of glass, in dappled shades of purple, green, and crimson—now reflects only the deep blue vault above, and now soft shades of violet and orange blend like streams of liquid gold and amethysts. In the distance, Ischia, and Procida lie wrapped in purple vapors; and nearer, Capri seems to drift like an enchanted isle. Vesuvius holds sullenly aloft over all her threatening torch, which no one can look upon without feeling moved by the terror of its mysterious source and fatal power.

Surrounded by all this indescribable beauty, Carroll and Agatha passed the days of their honeymoon. They often made excursions in the neighborhood to Capri's blue grotto, and the ruins of the Villa of Tiberius; to Amalfi's bewitching shore, and to Salerno's magnificent amphitheatre of hills; to the desolate but imposing ruins of the majestic Greek temples of Paestum; and to the numerous little villages that nestled down, until they are all but lost, in the brimming foliage of the "piano di Sorrente," as the natives call their little plain.

And so these halcyon days glided by, and the last evening at Sorrento came. Agatha and Carroll were sitting in the moonlight, on the square terrace (which commands such an unsurpassed view that the villa is known by the name of "the paradise of Sorrento") in a silence more eloquent than speech; yet their inexpressible happiness was tempered by the sadness caused by their approaching departure from a spot which had enriched their lives with a world of precious memories.

At last Agatha spoke.

"Carroll, I had the strangest fancy to-day. I am almost ashamed to tell you—you will think it such a wild idea, but you remember our walk in the lemon grove at Massa. While I was waiting for you, when you went in with the peasant to buy some of his old coins, I kept on beyond the grove, into an open field, where there was a fountain with a stone seat beside it, at the end of an avenue of trees. I walked on, and sat down. Nothing but a vineyard lay between the fountain and a clump of ilex trees, where there stood in the shade the loveliest little peasant's cottage; and while I was sitting there I saw a peasant woman—not such a one as we see every day around us, but such as are painted in pictures—come out with a stone jug in her hand and approach the fountain. As she came near I was struck by her wonderful resemblance to Sarah Atherton; but in the same instant she saw me, and, turning suddenly, fairly flew back to the cottage."

"Well, was there anything remarkable in that, my darling?"

"Yes, Carroll, it was remarkable; because the woman had the form, the face, the very same brown rippling hair, with a golden gleam when the sun struck it, that Mrs. Atherton's hair has. I was startled at the time by the resemblance, and the more I think of it the more I feel sure that it was she."

"My darling, you ought to have told me of this sooner. We ought not to think of leaving Sorrento until we make sure that it was or was not Mrs. Atherton."

"Oh no, do not let us turn her pursuers. When I think of all she has lost out of life, from not marrying one whom she loved—of all that she must have suffered in marrying one who was physically repulsive to her, I would think we were as cruel as if we were to give a hunted fawn into the hands of its pursuers. No, all believed her dead; let them continue to believe so; but I shall always think of her and the pretty peasant woman as of one, and the same person."

"If you are right, and I would not wonder if you are, who could have brought her here? Everyone comes to Sorrento; it is the last place in the world to hide in."

"But everyone does not drive to Massa, and get out of the carriage to walk through its lemon-groves, and explore the country beyond, and sit down to rest by a fountain. Of course, if Mrs. Atherton is here, no one brought her; you know well she speaks Italian."

"Child! what a child you are, Agatha! If it is Mrs. Atherton, she is not living in this solitude without a lover. And who can he be? Mr. Jenkins, without doubt, I should say."

"Oh no; he returned home, you know. Don't you remember that I told you I had received a letter from him, and how coolly he speculated upon the mystery of her disappearance."

"Ah, the rascal! that was a blind, of course. He never went to America, my love. No, we will not turn detectives, but leave them to enjoy their stolen flowers and forbidden fruit as long as they can; the worm that never dies lies in the heart of those flowers, and the serpent's tooth still leaves its traces on such fruit. Ah, my darling, not in vain did we struggle through hours of passionate longing and dull despair; not in vain did we exercise that self-renunciation which duty required of us; our reward is in this ideal marriage, which unites us without leaving any memories of sin to corrode our lives."

How fondly Carroll Tracey looked upon the saintly face, with its Madonna eyes, that was raised to his own in the streaming moonlight. He drew her head down upon his breast, kissing with reverent tenderness the eyelids, as they closed in the fulness of her great joy, and whispering:

"Our marriage, my adored Agatha, is not only for time, but for eternity."

The next morning they left Sorrento. Upon their arrival in Lucerne they spoke only to Aunt Hester and Mr. Lee of Agatha's adventure. Mr. Clawson, who was also at the Schweizerhof, told them that although he had no positive proof that Mrs. Atherton was living, he had suspicions that she had been aided, if not accompanied, by Mr. Jenkins in her departure.

"If it had been a man with any other name than Jenkins," Mr. Clawson said, with his usual frivolity, "I could have forgiven the elopement, for such I believe it to have been. A man with the name of Jenkins has no excuse for being a scoundrel. It is my name, Clawson, that has always kept me straight. There's Frank Mortimer—I can't spoil a story, Mr. Tracey, for relation's sake—he has a name that would plead in his behalf, were *he* to elope. By the way, they say he is going to marry that charming little widow, Mrs. Arthur Grey. And Paul Howard—and Harold Graham—why, you see fellows with such names as those can't escape with commonplace lives. If you want a man to have a romantic life, give him a romantic name; commonplace lives and commonplace names go together: that is my theory."

"What made you think of Paul Howard and Harold Graham in this connection?" asked Agatha.

"Why, it was quite natural, I think; Graham having shot himself when he heard of Mrs. Mortimer's marriage. I beg your pardon Mr. Tracey, I had entirely forgotten; I had indeed: you must excuse me. Let me see, what was I saying? oh, that Paul Howard,—of course you have heard of his fate?"

"No," answered Agatha; "neither had we heard that Mr. Graham was dead."

"'Accidentally shot himself,' the newspapers said. I did not hear how it was myself until months after."

"But what about Paul Howard? has anything happened to him?"

"I should think you had been residing in the moon, or rather at the south pole, inasmuch as the wise men say that we know more about the moon here than we do about the Antarctic circle. Why, the papers have been flooded, for a month now, with all sorts of versions of his duel with Matthews, whose wife's *liaison* with Howard became so public that a challenge ensued; and the accounts say that Howard's wound has affected his brain, and that his friends have had to remove him to an asylum. Well, I believe in the old adage, 'As you make your bed, so you must lie upon it.'"

This time, rumor had not exaggerated, all had happened as Mr. Clawson had stated. Before long the engagement of Mrs. Grey to Mr. Mortimer was authentically announced; but no one had any opportunity to feel surprised, as it had so frequently been announced before. Everyone agreed that it was a most suitable alliance, inasmuch as each had had so many love affairs that it could not be supposed that either possessed any advantages over the other.

When Agatha received a letter from her cousin, asking her to write to his *fiancee*, as such, she charitably said:

"Poor little woman! After all, Carroll, she was more sinned against than sinning. Almost compelled by her father to marry a man whom she felt no affection for, she fell in love with Frank; but I must do her the justice to say that with all her flirtations I really believe she never loved anyone but him. Is it not strange how often men marry the very women who are the farthest removed from their ideals? There is Mr. Marston, who never could find a wife good enough for him, taken in at last by a widow, whose history, if written, would introduce events in the lives of other men than her husband; and now, here is Frank going to be married to the most incorrigible flirt of his acquaintance. I hope he is marrying her for love, and not for her wealth."

"I am not ashamed to own, that I married my wife for her wealth," said Carroll Tracey, looking into Agatha's fond eyes.

"How can you say such words, even in jest?" she asked.

"I am not in jest—they are the truest words I have spoken. I married my wife for her wealth of mind and soul; and, more than all, for her wealth of love for me—such wealth, that there is not one hour of these sweet days in which I do not thank God for bestowing such a treasure upon me, begging Him that I may grow more worthy of the blessing which I possess—that blessing which even Solomon declares to be without price—beyond that of gold and rubies—a virtuous wife."

Agatha's only answer was a kiss that she left upon his hair as she stooped; and happy tears in her eyes that made them shine like brown diamonds, when their yellow hearts flash back the light. She stood, folding back with soft caresses the hair she had kissed, and when he drew her down, she, looking into his well-like eyes said, "I see only myself; Carroll your eyes are so full of me that I can see nothing else in them."

"You see my soul, Agatha; it is my soul, and not my eyes that you are looking into when you see yourself. There is no room for any other there, for it is through my love for you that I have learned to love the Infinite One."

His words were music to her ears—far sweeter strains than those floated down to them from the old cathedral where the organ's swelling notes were vibrating through the air, and the low chant of vesper hymns.

Agatha's dream of Platonic love had ended for ever. She had found the friend she had longed for—with vague, shadowy longing—scarce knowing what she sought; and in finding him she had learned that none can sustain such ideal relations as she had dreamed of sustaining, outside of married life, without walking on dangerous ground, bordering precipices where one false step would lead them into an abyss in which none walk with souls unhaunted by remorseful memories and despairing thoughts.

[THE END.]

VALUE OF A NOSE.—American girls will learn with interest that the value of a French girl's nose has just been judicially placed at $1,000. Some time ago a Paris omnibus horse became frisky, there was a collision, a window was smashed, and a passenger, a young demoiselle, received some of the broken glass in her face. It was at first thought the hurts were trifling, and her parents declined the proffered service of the omnibus company's doctor. But the scratches did not heal as they were expected to, and the girl's father brought suit against the company, alleging that her nose had been permanently marred, and that this seriously diminished her prospect of establishment in life—in other words of getting a husband. He obtained $200 on the first trial and $1,000 on the second.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

It is but the littleness of man that seeth no greatness in trifles.

A year of pleasure passes like a fleeting breeze, but a moment of sorrow seems an age of pain.

The affection of parents is best shown to their children by teaching them what is good and true.

Great souls are always loyally submissive to what is over them: only mean souls are otherwise.

Courage, the commonest of the virtues, obtains more applause than discretion, the rarest of them.

Love can excuse anything except meanness; but meanness kills love, and cripples even natural affection.

Censure is most effectual when mixed with praise: so when a fault is discovered, it is well to look up a virtue to go in company with it.

Never retire at night without being wiser than when you rose in the morning, by having learned something useful during the day.

The man who violently hates or ardently loves, cannot avoid being in some degree or sense a slave to the person he detests or adores.

The habit of resolving without acting is worse than not resolving at all, inasmuch as it gradually sunders the natural connection between thought and deed.

Many persons are purified and exalted by sickness, as if the hand of disease had been stretched out over them only to make the sign of the cross on their souls.

A diseased mind turns every chance accident to its own distempered view, and makes the terror, or the sorrow, which exists but in its own imagination, a very reality of evil.

In most quarrels there is a fault on both sides. Both flint and steel are necessary to the production of a spark; either of them may hammer on wood forever, and no spark will fly.

Consult your friend on all things, especially on those which respect yourself. His counsel may then be useful where your own self-love might very naturally impair your judgment.

A weakly, affectionate heart must not be hardened, but its honor and purity strengthened. The daring spirit must not be rudely checked and made timid, but taught prudence.

Aim at perfection in everything, though in most things it is unattained. However, they who aim at it and persevere, will come much nearer it than those who give it up as unattainable.

The difference between those whom the world esteems as good, and those it condemns as bad, is in many cases little else than that the former have been sheltered from temptation.

Many a true heart that, like a dove to the ark, would have come back after its first transgression, has been frightened beyond recall by the angry look and menace of an unforgiving spirit.

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1821
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SATURDAY EVENING, SEPT. 21, 1878.

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THEN AND NOW.

From the times of powder and periwigs, patches and sacques, when a young gentleman of twenty-one, bowing low with his hand on his heart, addressed his betrothed as "Madam," and swore by strange oaths that he esteemed her conversation a favor of which he was unworthy; while she, with a deep courtesy, replied, "Sir," and assured him that his regard was vastly flattering, up to the present day of no manners to speak of, there has been a step so wide as to make us almost wonder if it is the same race which holds this land of ours now, as lived, loved and died then. From courteousness that ran into formality of the stiffest kind, we have come to "girls with no nonsense about them," who are "Lottie" and "Louie," "Georgie" and "Carrie," to their male friends, while these self-same masculines are to them "Charley" and "Jack," individually, and "dear boys" all around.

From a strict division of the sexes, in all the more important affairs of life, when the men took the public business and the women stayed at home—the men attended to politics and the women to the house and children—we have come to an intermingling of functions and a likeness of habits which, as the saying goes, are almost enough to make our grandmothers and their grandmothers turn in their graves. For the management of the farm-yard and the still room, we have the study of political economy and the causes of pauperism; for needle-work and the sewing-machine, medical education; for the care of children and the knowledge of simples, a fair for the benefit of the hospital. Everywhere we see this total change of habits and manners, but in nothing more than the tone of familiarity between the young of both sexes, in vogue in certain societies.

Far short of bowing at every sentence, putting one's hand on one's heart and saying "Madam" to a girl of nineteen, are there not sundry small formalities which it would be as well to observe, and free and easy discourtesies which it would be better to avoid?

Is it "pretty" to see a young fellow lolling his full length on the sofa, or tipping himself back airily in his chair, or sitting across the seat with the back rail for his pulpit edge, whence he holds forth on the surpassing jollity and screaming fun of this or that? Could he not find a better use for his hands in a quadrille, through which he walks lazily as a ploughboy over the heavy clods, than thrusting them into his trousers pockets till wanted for the exigencies of the figure?—when in all probability, if a fine gentleman in his impertinence, he offers the tip of one finger to his lady; if a boor, he grasps her whole hand up to her wrist.

Free and easy manners are all very well, but without question it is carried too far, and there is a want of chivalry and courtesy in too much familiarity.

No kindly natured person wishes to prevent the young from having as much pleasure as is consistent with innocence and propriety; and American parents are not Turkish pashas, wanting to shut up their daughters like so many Fatimas and Zuleikas, or even like so many Spanish Juanitas, Italian Marias, or French Virginies. Freedom is part of the American character from end to end; but there are such things as wholesome restraints even in freedom, and liberty, to be beautiful or valuable, must not degenerate into licence. And this new outbreak—this free conduct among our girls—goes perilously near to the forbidden margin and threatens license as the seamy side of liberty; just as in olden times formalism was the seamy side of respect, and chivalry degenerated into priggishness and affectation. One significant fact too we may mention:—the rarity of marriage between these Charleys and Lotties, Harrys and Louies. When the young men marry, they choose a young girl who has not been their chum, and with whom they have never been on the lounging free-and-easy terms; and if Lottie and Louie find a husband, it is one caught flying, and before their propensity for Charleyism has had time to manifest itself. After marriage the whole thing naturally falls to the ground; and it is worth while to reflect whether a practice which does not root itself in marriage anyhow is one to be cherished by women who know that the natural life is the most wholesome, and that the course which most secures the respect and affection of men is the wisest for them to pursue.

JOHN CHINAMAN will, in due course of time, annoy our neighbor Canada as much as he does us. In British Columbia the government has begun the collection of a Chinese head-tax. Steps have been taken by the Dominion officials to test the validity of the act depriving them of the right to vote.

SANCTUM CHAT.

THINGS look brighter because iron and coal are looking up.

A Swiss watchmaker and chemist has invented a watch dial which is phosphorescent, so that at night, or in the dark, it will distinctly show the hours.

To show the interest which a Parisian public take in flowers, it is stated upon good authority that the city of Paris gets nearly a quarter of a million a year, for the rent of its flower stalls.

THE "cold wave" which has been predicted, is on its way, so that those who have invested in ulsters and gum shoes, and extra woolens, will be happy in the thought that they at least will be the most comfortable of mortals, when the rest of humanity is shivering with the autumn chills.

DEATH'S quota is being rapidly filled. What with the yellow fever in the South, sundry railway accidents in the North, the Indian massacres, the famine in China, the loss of the Princess Alice in the English Channel, and the terrible choke-damp explosion at the Abercarne colliery in South Wales, this planet of ours has been bereft of its population to no inconsiderable extent.

AS a sample of American enterprise, we learn that five steamers left for Europe on Saturday last. The live cattle shipments were about 200 head, and the quantity of grain 200,000 bushels. A larger consignment of fresh meat went out, also. The Gulon steamer for Southampton took out five street cars to the order of an English firm who are constructing tramroads in different parts of Britain and the continent.

PROGRESS is steadily being made with the electric light, both in the sense of improving the apparatus needed for utilizing it, and in finding for it practical application. In Paris the railway station Gare St. Lazare is now very effectually lighted with the aid of the instrument known as Lontin's Distributing Machine. The electric candle, invented by Jobloshkoff, is used for illuminating the Opera Square in the same city. The great drawback to the Jobloshkoff candle is its costliness, the illumination being as expensive as when gas is used. The electric light can be seen at the Wednesday evening soirees at the Permanent Exhibition Building.

CYPRUS, the sop which the Turks ceded to the English Cerberus of a Disraeli, is, according to some accounts a dull place. There is no music. There is but one piano on the island, there is no society, there is no resort for an afternoon stroll. True, there is a billiard table, but there is no chalk. A bill posted on the walls of a house in Scala announced in four languages—Greek, English, Turkish and Italian—that the Gazette Cyprus was to be established as soon as the permission of "our respectable government" could be obtained. An attempt was also tried to introduce from Beyrout, a live cargo of a shameless character, but Lord John Hay very properly put his veto on the importation.

ALL men have at length discovered that the history of mankind means something, and are naturally intent on learning what it means. No one now regards it as a mere phantasmagoria significant of nothing but Adam, Sin and the Garden. However undecided on other points, we all now perceive that the history of the mind of man is a more interior history of the universe—that it must be studied in the most earnest and reverential spirit of science—that what astronomy seeks to do in the heavens, and geology on the earth, must be done in the realms of the mind—and that, till we have found our Copernicus and our Newton of the human soul, modern science lingers in the porch, and does not find access to the temple.

THE severe storm which we have experienced here, did great damage in the West. At Meadville, in this State, the creek was flooded, and $100,000 worth of property destroyed. A freight train on the Atlantic & Great Western Railroad broke through a bridge three miles from the town, and the engineer, fireman and brakeman were drowned. A man was also drowned by falling into the swollen creek at Meadville. A train on the Erie & Pittsburgh road ran into a culvert near Shenango, killing the engineer and fireman, and fatally injuring the brakeman. A house was swept away at Conneautville, and it is feared several lives were lost. At Geneva a man and boy were drowned. In Canada the Great Western, Grand Trunk, and Toronto, and other railways have suffered, and navigation on the Welland canal, stopped.

A PHYSICIAN who has just returned from the South says that he passed through four yellow fever epidemics, one at Bombay, in India, two at New Orleans, and one at Key West, but he has seen nothing to compare with the death-stricken aspect of Memphis at the present time. The wealthy have almost all departed, leaving the poor to shift as they may for themselves, and to the horrors of the plague are added those of a condition approaching to famine. The banks are open only one hour a day. At night the streets are lit up with here and there the gleam of death fires, which burn in front of houses containing a corpse though not of every such house, for many a victim dies alone after suffering unattended, and there is no one to put out the customary signal. Persons taken sick on the streets crawl into unoccupied tenements and their corpses are afterwards discovered by the odor. The peculiar smell of the pest can be discerned at a distance of three miles.

OSTRICH FARMING.

Within the last seven or eight years, an industry has sprung up at the Cape of Good Hope, Africa, which, on account of its novelty and the important results it produces, is worthy of notice. It is that of keeping ostriches in a state of semi domestication, for the sake of their feathers, which have lately become more and more scarce, and therefore more valuable. From the Cape, the business of ostrich farming has been introduced into South America, where it is carried on with more or less success; but the best feathers are still those which are produced in the south of Africa.

Like many other important undertakings, ostrich farming, if not actually the result of an accidental discovery, at least received a great impetus from an apparently trifling circumstance. A few years ago, one of the native traders in ostrich feathers and eggs, having more eggs than he could conveniently carry, left four or five of them in a cupboard adjoining a bakehouse in some Algerian town; and upon his return about two months afterward, he was surprised to find the broken shells of his ostrich eggs and a corresponding number of young ostrich chicks. The birds were of course dead from want of attention, but the fact was undeniable that the fresh eggs of two months ago had, under the influence of the high temperature, actually produced fully developed chickens. This circumstance came to the knowledge of an officer of the French army, who immediately perceived the practical results that might ensue from a careful following up of the hint thus strangely given. He went to work to devise artificial incubators, for the purpose of hatching ostrich eggs, and at the same time he procured some pairs of adult birds, to rear them in a state of semi-domestication.

It is needless to here enter into particulars of the difficulties he had to encounter. Suffice it to say that after many disappointments he had the satisfaction to find a live ostrich chick actually hatched in his apparatus, and thus his assiduous efforts were rewarded. About fifty-three or fifty-four days is the full term of incubation, which may be slightly accelerated or retarded by a trifling change in the heat to which the eggs are subjected, although the smallest excess or want of heat beyond a limited range is fatal. But to such perfection have artificial incubators now been brought, that the whole sitting of eggs may be hatched with even more certainty than if left to the natural care of the parents.

The baby chick when it makes its debut is about the size of a small common fowl, and begins to pick up food at once. The nature of the food suitable for the brood and the adults was a principal difficulty in the first attempts at the artificial breeding of the ostrich; but a careful study of the habits of the birds in a wild state has resulted in the discovery of the best kind of food suited to the welfare of their domesticated brethren. The principal food given to the young birds is lucerne and thistles, and tender herbs and grasses indigenous to the country. Older birds are fed on more matured plants and shrubs, the leaves of which they strip off with their beaks. They are also fed on Indian corn, which is known at the Cape as "mealies."

It will be interesting to note that when the full number of eggs has been laid, the old birds invariably place one or two of them outside the nest—the nest consisting naturally of a hollow scooped out of the sand by the action of the legs and wings of the birds. It has been found that these eggs are reserved as food for the chicks, which in the natural state are often reared miles away from a blade of grass or other food. As soon as the chicks emerge from the shells, the parent ostrich breaks one of these eggs, and the yolk is eagerly eaten up by the young ones. They are therefore both herbivorous and carnivorous, but it is not necessary to gratify their appetite for flesh, as they thrive excellently on the herbs above mentioned. Of course where food is supplied in abundance, this precaution of the parent birds in providing meat for their offspring is not necessary, and each egg so left is therefore wasted. Considerable loss also occurs in the number of addled eggs when they are left to be hatched by the parents. It is said that the ostrich is able to discover when an egg becomes addled, and that it immediately ejects it from the nest—thus showing an amount of wisdom that has hardly been attributed to a bird which is popularly supposed to thrust its head under a bush when it is pursued, in the hope that, as it cannot then see, it cannot be seen by its pursuer.

These observations were first made in Algeria, but it is at the Cape that they have been turned to practical account, and a very perfect system of ostrich farming has been established there. Different practices prevail at different establishments. The birds are allowed occasionally to sit, but the success which has attended the use of artificial contrivances is so great that fewer losses occur by this means than under natural circumstances, and the use of incubators is becoming very general. The chicks produced are so healthy as to show that they do not suffer by the treatment.

The general arrangement of ostrich farms is very similar in all cases. The necessaries are plenty of space, suitable soil—that is, sand and pasture with facilities for growing the proper food—conveniences for shelter, and water. A well conducted farm would require perhaps $15,000 capital to begin in a small way. The industry at the Cape is only eight years old, and much has to be learned by a beginner; loss and disappointment are frequently experienced at first; but the occupation is considered a very profitable one, and is certainly healthy and agreeable. Yet nowhere are patience, sagacity and perseverance more needed than in the conduct of a good ostrich farm.

A healthy bird of a week old is worth $50; at three months old it will be worth $75; and at six months, $150 or more. Feathers may be plucked from the ostrich when a year old, and each year's crop will be worth about $35 per bird. At five years the breeder begins to pair his birds, and each pair will yield from eighteen to twenty-four eggs in a season. It is necessary to keep the adult birds in separate paddocks. The ostrich is liable to sudden fits of jealousy. In such a case, frequent quarrels would ensue if all the birds were together in one enclosure, with the result, if not of black eyes, at least of damaged feathers, and perhaps broken legs and even death to one of the combatants. The blow from the leg of the ostrich has been computed to be fully equal to that developed by the kick of a colt seven months old. But whatever be the exact force produced, it is very severe—sufficiently so to break a man's leg.

The ostrich, however, both male and female, is quite an exemplary parent, notwithstanding the popular opinion that, like the crocodile, it leaves its eggs in the sand, to be hatched simply by the action of solar heat. Father and mother take it in turn to sit on the eggs, and when the ostrich takes his female companions out for their evening promenade in the desert, one of them always remains by the nest. This fact is sufficient to induce many breeders to leave the eggs to be hatched in the natural way, and merely to devote themselves to rearing young birds and collecting feathers.

These are operations which require very great care. Regular supplies of food—about two pounds a day to each adult—are necessary; shelter must be provided for the night and to shield the birds from the violent storms which frequently burst over southern Africa; and there must be supplies of sand or pebbles, which the birds swallow as aids to digestion. Pepsine is unknown among these birds of the desert, and they introduce a quantity of hard substances into their gizzards to assist them in grinding up their food—just as the dyspeptic featherless biped takes his morning bitters to help the secretion of the gastric juices. It is very amusing to watch the flock of young birds as the attendant enters to scatter their breakfast. The moment he appears with his load, the youngsters of the ostrich family trot up to the entrance, and caper and dance about in the most grotesque manner, and devour their food with evident relish. They are generally tame and to a certain extent tractable; but as they grow old they sometimes manifest a sourness of temper which is anything but encouraging to a nearer acquaintance with them.

As the feathers are picked they are sorted according to their quality and purity of color. The pure whites from the wings are called bloods, the next quality prime whites, firsts, seconds, and so on. The tail feathers are not so valuable, and the more irregular the markings of the colored varieties, the less valuable are they. Bloods will fetch from $200 to $250 per pound weight in the wholesale market, and from this price they range as low as a dollar or two per pound weight.

The quality of feathers produced by tame ostriches is fully equal to the best collected from wild birds, while the general average is much higher. Notwithstanding the increasing yield, prices are rising instead of falling; indeed, good ostrich feathers are now thrice as dear as they were fifteen years ago. But it is more than probable that as the production increases the price will eventually fall. Even with reduced prices the profit would be sufficiently large to render ostrich farming a very profitable undertaking, and, as each year will increase the experience of breeders, the difficulties will be gradually diminished and losses more easily avoided. As it is, this strange industry—the domestication of the wild birds of the desert, once regarded as types of liberty and intractability—is at the same time one of the most interesting and most profitable of the African trader.

Precious Stones.

There can be no doubt that the many-aged belief in the occult virtues of precious stones has added greatly to the prestige of these beautiful "flowers of the mineral world."

The sage Bacon gives some reasons for the estimation in which jewels are held. He says: "There are many things that operate upon the spirits of man by secret sympathy and antipathy. That precious stones have virtues in the wearing has been anciently and generally received, and they are said to produce several effects. So much is true, that gems have fine spirits, as appears by their splendor, and so may operate by consent on the spirits of men, to exhilarate and strengthen them."

No people were more credulous as to the mysterious powers of precious stones than the Jews and the nations bordering upon them. It became a peculiar profession of one part of their sages to investigate and interpret the various shades and comunications of precious stones.

Among the Arabians, serpents were supposed to possess precious stones of inestimable value. This belief was current through many ages. In an old book of eastern travels we find an account of a great jewel that was taken from a serpent's head and used in conjuring. A serpent is also mentioned with eyes of real jacinth. In the romantic history of Alexander, he is said to have seen serpents in the Vale of Jordan "with collars of huge emeralds growing on their backs." Milton gives his serpent eyes of carbuncle. A marvellous stone was said to be found in the serpent's brain, but in order to secure its lustre and potent influences, it was necessary that it should be extracted from the living reptile.

The Draconitis, or snake stone, described as of a black color and pyramidal in form, was taken out of the dragon's head as it lay panting. Allusions to serpent stones are frequent in the early writers. We read that the Emperor Theodosius the Blind ordained that the cause of any injured person should be heard on his ringing a bell, which was placed in a public part of his palace. A serpent had a nest near the spot where the bell rope hung. In the absence of the serpent a toad took possession of her nest. The serpent, twisting itself around the rope, rang the bell for justice, and by the emperor's express command the toad was killed. A few days afterward, as the emperor was reposing on his couch, the serpent entered the apartment, bearing a precious stone in its mouth, and, crawling up to the emperor's face, laid the stone on his eyes and glided out of the chamber. The monarch was at once restored to sight.

Apropos of the burglarious toad, the philosophers taught that though ugly and venomous, it "wears yet a precious jewel in its head." If swallowed it was a certain antidote for poison, and it was usual to take it as a precautionary pill, rather a hard one, before eating. It was supposed in the Highlands to prevent the burning of houses and the sinking of boats, and if the commander in the field had one about him, he would either be sure to win the day, or all his men would die on the spot.

The bezoar was a stone procured from a wild animal of Arabia, and was supposed to have been formed of the poison of serpents which had bitten the creature, combined with the counteracting matter with which nature had furnished it. There was a belief in the Middle Ages that the bezoar was a potent charm against the plague and against poison.

Faith in the virtues of certain precious stones for the cure of diseases was transmitted from early ages to a comparatively recent period. In the church of Old Saint Paul's, London, England, was a famous sapphire, for curing infirmities of the eyes. In reference to Queen Elizabeth's assumed power of healing scrofulous persons by the royal touch, it was said that she did it in virtue of some precious stone in the crown of England, that possessed the miraculous gift of healing.

The wonderful effects of stones found in various animals are too numerous to mention. The brain of a tortoise contained one that had the effect of a fire annihilator in extinguishing flames; moreover, whoever did at a proper time, having first washed his mouth, carry it under his tongue, felt a divine inspiration to foretell future events. Birds were particularly distinguished for the possession of talismanic stones. The hyena was hunted, not for its ferocious propensities, but for a precious stone in one of its eyes, full of mystic virtues. One of the most curious superstitions, and one which has been a favorite theme with writers in all ages, is connected with the carbuncle, or the ruby. Ælian, a Roman writer, has a singular story on this subject, how a certain widow had tended a young stork that had broken its leg, and how the grateful bird, returning from its annual migration, dropped into her lap a precious stone, which, on her awaking at night, lighted up her chamber like a blazing torch.

The fabulous animal called the carbuncolo—said to have been seen in some parts of Peru—is represented to be about the size of a fox, with long black hair, and is only visible at night, when it slinks slowly through the thickets. If followed, it is said to open a flap or valve in the forehead, from which an extraordinary and brilliant light issues. The natives believe that the light comes from a precious stone, and that any person who may venture to grasp at it rashly, is blinded. Then the flap is let down, and the animal escapes in the darkness.

Innumerable were the effects produced by certain precious stones. Among others, the heliotrope had special virtues. It was called by necromancers "the Babylonian gem," and if rubbed over with the juice of the herb of its own name, it rendered the wearer invisible. In the Middle Ages, the heliotrope which contained many red spots were highly valued, from a belief that the blood of Jesus was diffused through the stone. The moonstone, as its name implies, was venerated for its supposed lunar attraction. It is one of the prettiest, though most common of precious stones in Ceylon. Pliny describes it as containing an image of the moon, "which, if the story be true, daily waxes or wanes according to the state of that luminary."

Chalcedony hung about the neck dispelled sadness, and if a person carried one perforated, with the hair of an ass run through it, he would overcome all disasters. Crystal dispelled witchcraft. The chrysoprasus gladdened the heart, the chrysolyte expelled phantoms, and, what was more serviceable, rid people of their follies. The onyx in the Middle Ages was believed to prevent ugly dreams by night and lawsuits by day. The jasper was a charmer of scorpions and spiders, and was worn as a talisman by the Roman athlete: Burton, in The Anatomy of Melancholy, tells us that "it hung about the neck, or taken in drink, it much resisteth sorrow, and recreates the heart." The same qualities were attributed to the hyacinth and topaz. The crystal has been the most popular of all oracular stones. A favorite stone was the beryl, which, an old author says, "is a kind of crystal that has a weak tincture of red; in this magicians see visions." The custom was to consecrate, or charge them, as the modern term is, for which purpose set forms were used.

The properties of the ruby were endless; bruised in water, it was a panacea for all complaints; it had the peculiarity, wherever worn, of discovering its presence by its lustre, which would shine through the thickest clothes. Powdered agate was an infallible remedy for all the ills that flesh is heir to. The amethyst would prove a boon to modern tipplers if, as the ancients asserted, it would prevent intoxication. The sapphire and the emerald strengthened the sight, a property said to have been possessed also by the turquoise, but it could confer a still more wonderful gift on its wearer. One authority remarks: "Whoever wears a turquoise, so that it, or its gold setting, touches the skin, may fall from any height, and the stone attracts to itself the full force of the blow, so that it cracks and the person is safe." The Romans regarded the diamond with superstitious reverence, and Pliny tells us that it baffles poison, keeps off insanity, and dispels all vain fears. An Arabian writer, alluding to the electric properties of the diamond, says: "It has an affinity for gold, small particles of which fly towards it. It is also wonderfully sought after by ants, who crowd over it as if they would swallow it up." A marvellous curative power was supposed to exist in a diamond in the Island of Borneo, the Malays believing that a draught of water in which it had been placed would cure every disease.

The belief in these magical properties of precious stones existed in the most civilized countries, till within the last two centuries, among all classes, and the superstitions in some have not yet entirely died out.

Some Facts About the Earth.

Geology is the science which treats upon the original conformation, changes and other subjects connected with the crust of the globe we inhabit, so far as we have at present the means of judging from scientific research, and the various theories founded thereon. There are no mines that penetrate deeper below the surface than 2700 feet, nor are there any mountains that much exceed 30,000 feet in height; so that our knowledge of the interior crust of the globe would be very limited were it not for the wonderful effects of volcanic agency, which causes the mineral rocks to boil up, as it were, crack the stratified rocks that lie over them, sometimes turn them up on end (though more than 30,000 feet in thickness), and overflow the upper surface with lava.

Rivers and mountain streams carry down immense quantities of earthy matter from the high lands to the plains, which is held in solution and deposited in the still waters of the lakes or seas into which they run. A mountain torrent suddenly formed from snow melted by a torrent of red hot lava in Peru, was discovered to have carried rocks twelve feet in diameter more than one hundred yards. The Niagara river has already cut for itself a channel several hundred feet in breadth and seven miles long, through solid limestone rock and shale, from Queenstown to the Falls; and the Falls themselves are receding slowly.

The head of a lake in the Alpine regions was accidentally dammed up some years ago during a severe winter, by the falling down of a glacier which completely stopped the passage. The inhabitants, fearing that when summer came the thaw would let out the pent up waters and flood the district, commenced vigorously cutting and excavating a passage for it. They had already let off half the water, when a sudden thaw came upon them—the torrent burst out and carried all before it, men, horses, cattle, villages, and whole forests. Probably, however, what is brought down by the above means is not the one-tenth part of the amount that is obtained from the springs, which, percolating through the mountain regions, attract by chemical affinity, and hold in solution, a vast amount of earthy and mineral particles, that are slowly carried down to the sea or the fresh water lakes.

The Delta at the mouth of the Ganges, in India, is a mass of alluvial deposit, the surface of which is already so far above the level of the sea as to be a vast jungle inhabited by wild animals, to a distance of 250 miles seaward from the mouth of the river—almost equal in size to England. The Delta at the mouth of the Orinoco is so large as to feed upwards of thirty thousand turtles, from which the Indians procure more than three millions of turtle eggs annually. It has been formed in precisely the same manner. There is at present a mass of timber and vegetable matter lying one thousand miles to seaward of the mouth of the Mississippi, of more than a million of cubic yards, which will probably become in time the nucleus of a future coal stratification.

What increases this powerful and continuous transport of material still more, is the very providential fact that little more than one-seventh of the rain that falls from the clouds reaches the plains in a direct manner—the remainder is attracted by the tops of the highest mountains, and finds its way to the plains gradually in the shape of springs, a part being locked up in snow and ice till melted by the summer heat, which, after being delayed for some time by underground filtration, finds its way into the tropical regions along the course of those mighty rivers such as the Amazon, the Orinoco, etc., to a distance of thousands of miles. We may observe in connection with the above fact that the height and size of mountains always increase as we approach the tropics, and decrease toward the poles. If the rain and the snow fell equally all over the surface of the globe, it would be so quickly carried off by evaporation in the hot climates as to render them almost totally uninhabitable, while the temperate regions would become vast marshes. Rivers would be dry at intervals, and springs and wells scarcely attainable in most situations.

Nothing keeps a man from being rich, like thinking he has enough; nothing from knowledge and wisdom, like thinking he has both.

He who thinks he can do without others is mistaken; but he who thinks that others cannot do without him, is still more mistaken.

THE BABY KING.

BY P. HENRY BOYLE.

His subjects tremble at his dread commands,
And do his bidding with submissive awe,
For, lord of laughing eyes and soft white hands,
He reigns a monarch far above the law.

The golden crown that girds his youthful brow
Possesses such a grace and royal charm
That these his courtiers, mad with love, would vow
To ten times die ere he should suffer harm.

The earth or sea contains no thing so dear
That the, his people, will not seek t' attain;
And, though the task be hard and toil severe,
Deem e'en a kiss or smile or nod sufficient gain.

The time so passes a ne'er-ending fete
Of mor ing greetings, state days, royal nights—
His kin content on every whim to wait,
And more than glad to add to his delights.

But one fair morn his former minions kneel
Before another shrine, and presents bring,
While loving lips a newer compact seal
In faith and hope with this, a later king.

And on the throne where he had sat so long—
Two years or more—his young successor lies
And hears the hum of praise and votive song
With wide awake but scarce responsive eyes.

So, like the larger world, the household realms
For some br of seaso n to these rulers cling;
But, soon dethroned, when Fate's strong hand o'erwhelms,
They too cry, "Hail! long live the Baby King!"

SYLVIA;

—OR— The Fernley Pride.

CHAPTER V.

Denis Fernley's wooing was quick but secure, and our marriage promised to follow it speedily. Mrs. Escombe was delighted, Lady Fernley reconciled to the demolition of her favorite scheme concerning her son and Miss Errington, and perhaps it does not become me to tell how happy we two were. But we were passionately happy. I know not which seemed the more so, though the former curious division between us—which had kept our minds, though not our hearts, asunder—caused us now to be perpetually making little discoveries in each other's characters and dispositions. Some were charming discoveries, some were surprises, but we were soon reconciled to even the least unendurable.

We began on a basis of perfect confidence. I told him everything of my past life; he told me everything of his. I learnt that I had had a predecessor in his affections, but that she was dead. They were unequal in fortune, and his mother had opposed the match; by appealing to the pride of the girl's family she had broken it off, and the girl died shortly afterwards.

How well I remember the morning he told me that! We were in the pretty old-fashioned morning room at the dower-house, and had been rambling about the fields all the morning.

"She was the very opposite of you—a meek small creature, soft as down, and as easily discomposed. Poor little Mary!" He said this as he put before me the locket miniature of a girl who looked all that he had described, and was, in addition, perfectly lovely—neither beautiful, handsome, nor pretty, but lovely—lovely in charm and expression, and who looked lovable even to my critical eyes.

"You pure spiritual creature!" I thought, looking at it and putting it to my lips—and then I said aloud, as I gave it back, "She does not envy me now—it seems impossible—but we know she is happier even than I am, and more to be envied. There, Denis—let me put it once more on your watchchain; always wear the locket, if you like."

"I cannot wear two," he returned, smiling, and fondly stroking my hair; "keep it for me."

"It shall be my talisman then," I answered seriously; "and, if I am ever angry with you, I shall go to it, and think how this gentle girl would behave in my case. Now," I said hurriedly, rummaging in my open desk to escape his demonstrative affection, which I had provoked by my unwonted meekness, "I too have a miniature to show you. This was among my father's papers, together with this little bundle of letters. You shall see the portrait afterwards, but first read a letter or two. I think they are so sweet and tender; they are written to papa, you see, and, besides the likeness, they are all I have of mamma."

He read them with me leaning on his shoulder, and warmly commended them.

"And now for her portrait!" I cried, in high spirits at his approval. "Aunt says the likeness is wonderfully good."

He looked at it long and earnestly. I grew impatient.

"Is it not a beautiful face?" I asked.

"Very beautiful," he said slowly, almost grudgingly, and with a most dissatisfied face. "But I cannot imagine it to have bent over those sweet modest letters. Those full red lips——"

"Give it to me!" I cried, half-provoked. "You are as bad as Jessa; she will scarcely allow that it is beautiful. I see you expected to find a pale Madonna-like creature; but do not try to discourage me—it is all I have of my mother, and I will still love this beautiful image of her."

"Turn your head. Look me full in the face," he said abruptly.

I obeyed him wonderingly, and he looked at me so steadily and strangely that I turned my head away, half offended, half wounded at the cruel pertinacity of his gaze.

He paid no attention when I left his side; and when I looked round at him again his expression was gloomy and abstracted.

"I remember you told me she was an orphan with only one relative, a brother in the Church. Did she die before or after you were stolen?" he asked at last, his eyes fixed on the carpet.

"A few months before, I think. Aunt Fanny has often wondered that my father did not go mad between his double loss; he seemed so passionately attached to her when aunt met them in Florence. He appreciated her beauty," I returned rather haughtily, for his suddenly troubled aspect was inexplicable to me.

"My princess!" His face changed and cleared as he rose and came to me. Putting his hand beneath my chin, he lifted and looked in my face with a very different expression on his from that is had worn just before. "You ought to pardon me for my liking any face but one, and this is not an atom like the picture. Now show me that you forgive me for being stupid and dull. I have one or two sad memories, my darling, as well as you; and you look sad sometimes."

"But you frightened me Denis," I murmured bashfully beneath his kisses; "and, please, the next time a sad memory recurs to you, don't let it be associated with my mother."

He promised laughingly, and we had only time to separate when both Lady Fernley and Mrs. Escombe came into the room. The latter held out a letter and looked deeply anxious.

"Only fancy, Sylvia—how tiresome!—at the very last moment here is a letter from Mrs. Clavering, saying it is impossible for Helen to act as one of your bridesmaids, as she is ill with pleurisy. How can we replace her? Who would care to accept the office as late as this?"

"I know one who would not mind such short notice to please me. May I ask Alice Grant?" I inquired eagerly.

"Miss Grant!" questioned Mrs. Escombe dubiously. "She is a very nice girl, and truly amiable; but—— How tiresome that Helen Clavering cannot come!"

"Why, aunt?" I asked impatiently. "I know very little of Helen, and care less; but I do like Alice. You know I wished her to be asked before, but you were so bent on the others. I think I might choose one of my bridesmaids myself."

I turned to the others. Lady Fernley was gazing at her son, who stood by the window, and a look of intelligence passed between them.

"Do help me against this obdurate aunt of mine, Lady Fernley—Denis—give me your voices; she must yield to such a majority. Why don't you speak? Why has Denis gone out on the balcony?" I paused with my cheeks flushing.

"We know nothing against Miss Grant herself, but unhappily she has not been blessed with good parents; her mother is a wicked woman, and we do not care to have the daughter associated with you on this occasion."

"Has she had wicked parents? I did not know it; but still, what has their conduct to do with Alice? No one can say a word against her; and is it not unjust and cruel to throw the blame on her? Denis is not so unkind, I know. If—if I had been so unfortunate, Lady Fernley, would he not have loved me just the same?"

"No, my dear," she said gently; "if as you say, you had been in poor Miss Grant's position, he would never have sought you. You know who says that the father's sins shall be visited on the children. It is a terrible thing to incur such punishment. No one who sees that unhappy Miss Grant can doubt that she feels it; but, when you are so entering on so solemn a phase of life as marriage, it behooves us all, in duty to yourself, and especially to your husband, to watch well that all your surroundings shall be stainless."

She spoke impressively and tenderly, and I scarcely felt the taint of pride in her words. A sudden depression came over me, and I could not feel the slightest gratitude that my lot was different from that of my ill-starred friend. It seemed such a chance of good fortune, if our whole existence was to be thus beyond our control, and we were to be sentenced or blessed before we knew evil even by name.

"I cannot understand it. Poor blameless Alice! I know now why he never seems to like her to be with me. Will no good man ever think of her apart from her misfortune, and love her in spite of it? Suppose Denis had loved her, and afterwards found out how sad a story she had—would he then have felt himself disgraced, though she loved him as I do, and would have clung to him if he had had the meanest hut on earth? You say he would have deserted her? I cannot think it," I said; and I looked up into her stern face as if my very life depended on her answer.

"You are over-excited, Sylvia—you quite tremble. Let me tell you something which will show you another side on the question. One of my son's earliest and best friends argued as you do when he made his choice of a wife. He was attached to a young, beautiful woman, of whom no one knew any evil save that, like Miss Grant, her mother had been divorced. He too thought he could separate the innocent daughter from the sinning mother, and married her. Now this woman came of a long brilliant line—but be satisfied in knowing that she inherited at once her mother's beauty and her vices. My son himself was frequently face to face with the sight of his friend's despair; worse still, he witnessed at last his degradation, for, when poor Hilton lost hope, he became a ruined character—ruined, Sylvia, through his wife."

I shuddered with some indefinable feeling as, kneeling by Lady Fernley, I looked towards the balcony and met Denis's piercing eyes fixed on me. Aunt dropped her work and looked at me too. The pause was unbroken till I said faintly:

"Is he—is your friend alive now?"

"No, Sylvia," answered Denis gravely as he stepped into the room. "He lived disgraced, and died a suicide. Better for him that he had never been born! Does my judgment seem harsh now, or my dread of hereditary crime unfounded?"

But I could not answer.

CHAPTER VI.

My wedding morning broke calm and sunny over the tall trees round the dower-house, and found me sitting at my window. Sleep had fled with the first streak of light, and I had some quiet hours to myself before the house was roused.

I was called from the window by the entrance of Mrs. Escombe, who gave me a close, almost tearful embrace. I believe she was privately scandalised by my serene state of mind, and persistently set herself to work to undermine it. She insisted on helping Jessa to dress me that morning, though she made a thousand mistakes, and then induced me to have breakfast with her alone in her dressing-room, and spoke in whispers all the time. She had resisted all my entreaties for a quiet wedding, and now the house contained six bridesmaids, their maids, and a large company besides.

If all the fuss was a plot to entrap me into more conventional behavior, it failed signally. The more they sighed and clung to me, the more unresponsive I felt and anxious to get the confusion over. It did not proceed from indifference to my dear aunt, or want of attachment to old scenes. I loved her dearly, and for weeks had suffered many pangs at the thought of parting with her and the dear old house and grounds, over which I had gone many times, taking silent farewells; but my whole nature revolted from the idea that I could be a special object of affectionate interest to many people who saw me for the first time during my wedding week, or that aunt Fanny should go about with a mysterious and woe-begone face because I was fortunate enough to be loved by Denis Fernley. In fact, I had been told so often that marriage was a solemn thing that it ceased to impress me, except with the idea that it was infinitely less solemn than the weary lectures so many matrons spent their spare moments in pouring into my reluctant ears.

At last aunt got tired of trying to awaken proper feelings, and when she also convinced herself that no symptom of hysteria lurked beneath the external calm, a strange, dreamy feeling came over me while they tugged and hustled me about.

When they flung the fleecy robe over me and fastened on the white wedding-veil, I did feel anxious to see the once destitute waif of Garthdale in her wedding dress. The calm, pale, serious face which awakened so much solicitude around me was Denis Fernley's choice. A great rosy blush swept over my countenance and drove me from the mirror.

In a little time I found myself looking up into Denis's eyes while my hand was held in a strong reassuring grasp. Then—we were married.

* * * * *

At the end of a week we found ourselves at Beechwood Manor, a large irregular Gothic pile. The trees which furnished its title still existed, though many ages had seen them with their seamed boles stand in scattered groups where a large wood had been formerly. Over the door was the date of the building—1610, cut deeply in the centre of a rose; and the house itself, with its oak panelling and floors, its deep windows, long galleries, wide staircases, and large hall, was romantic enough to delight me, to the satisfaction of my husband, who was attached to the old place, and feared I should have objected to it as dull.

Very possibly many people would have thought it uninteresting. The whole landscape around was flat, and bounded in the distance only by a range of low hills, while field after field lay stretched out in monotonous regularity, here and there intersected by a sluggish stream or narrow lane, and dotted with a few very primitive cottages.

Beechwood itself boasted all the real interest, but to me those charms were ample. The model-farm two miles off would be a perpetual source of amusement, the thin and scattered wood, the house itself, a second Boscobel. What a place to dream in! I preferred it to Truscott Hall, in the centre of the richer Midland county, and would not have changed its flatness, sameness, and dampness for any other place.

Denis and I had been walking about the ruined wood; he had been telling me of by-gone days, when the beeches had stood in perfect beauty, before the Parliamentary bullets had whistled among them. The day was fine and warm; the lichens and fungi about had begun to adopt strange bright tints, quaintly-mossed boughs stretched long arms above us, and the grass beneath our feet was lush and green. From where we paused I could see glimpses of the long gray and red house, the broad stone steps leading up to it, the grassy slope on either side. On one of these a favorite peacock displayed his beauties in the sun, and, as if to balance his glories, the eye caught sight at the other end of the house of the rich red brick of some outbuilding over which ivy had partly grown. As I gazed I thought nothing could be gayer and fairer.

I sat in the chequered shade in my dainty white wrapper gay with blue knots, and Denis was stretched beside me, holding that left hand of mine which he infinitely preferred to the right.

"Let me hear the tradition of your family," I remember saying, continuing the duet we had begun from the moment we left the pretty dower-house a week before, and had not tired of yet.

"But it is true, Sylvia, and not to be lightly spoken of because our 'ides of March' are over. However," he said musingly, after a moment's hesitation, "I suppose I did experience something of it when Mary Neville died. It is simply this. During the Crusades a certain ancestor of mine behaved very much like a scoundrel, as we often find our progenitors did, if we look into their deeds. He married a Syrian lady, brought her to England, and let her die of grief and neglect. On her death-bed she left her curse on the family, and from that hour every Fernley is in peril at the most critical period of his life—to wit, the ordeal I passed through when I chose you."

"Oh, I must tell Jessa this! She will think so much more of you. I believe she considers a family curse the most respectable inheritance one can receive. But has it ever been fulfilled?"

"Ever? You little skeptic! It would be strange indeed if from that age to this there have not been sufficient instances of its fulfillment to keep it alive."

"And how is it fulfilled? Do you Fernleys break your wives' hearts with impunity, or do your own heads come into danger?"

"Our wives are particularly blessed in their lords and masters, madam, the curse threatening our lives or happiness. For instance, one Fernley broke his neck two days before his marriage was to have been; another—Admiral Fernley—was shipwrecked off a desert island as he was coming home for a similar ceremony, poor old fellow; and so on. They are all in the picture-gallery there. I will give you a particular account of each some day."

"Especially of the very handsome man with the medallion and the quantity of beautiful lace; he is just like you Denis."

"I ought to be obliged for your pretty compliment, Sylvia," he said, laughing, "but I am not. That is the portrait of my namesake, Denis—and I am sorry to say he was a 'bad lot.' That is the 'wretch,' as you called him just now, who strung up a miserable spy from that very tree, while he watched him die from the library window, and turned that unhappy girl I told you of out to die in the bitter winter night. How absurd I am to tell you those horrible stories! My dear one, you do not suspect it is more than a casual family likeness, I hope? Look at me. Am I such an incarnate fiend as that man because I chance to resemble him?"

I looked, half painfully, half laughing at my own folly, into his face as he gently drew me close to him. No; the veriest coward could fear nothing now from such a countenance, softened as it always was when he looked at me. He had been called stern-looking, but his beautiful eyes, so brilliant, yet soft, seemed to laugh gently at my fears, without betraying any of fence at the unflattering turn they had taken.

"Really, you have been abusing your ancestors so dreadfully yourself that you cannot wonder I began to fancy myself in rather doubtful company," I said persistently.

"I am glad to see you covered with confusion; after harboring a doubt against your husband, you cannot look the injured man in the face."

"Can I not, sir? More than that I can say. We have a very stern mouth," I answered, as my eyes fell shyly before his.

"What sharp eyes those lovely brown ones must be to see through this thicket!" he laughed; and he stroked down his beautiful glossy beard. "Ah, darling, will the time ever come when I could be stern to you?"

I raised my head.

"I have seen you look stern, and some day I shall certainly offend you, and you will be angry, but I hope not for long, with me. Denis, I do want you to promise that when that sad time comes you will tell me at once, and not feel it without letting me know my offence."

"What would I not promise you?" he said fondly. "But, darling, do not frighten yourself. Who can pass a lifetime together without giving each other occasional cause for displeasure? But always remember this—you have no rival living or dead in my heart. I love you now and for ever. Nothing can part us."

"Nothing, Denis? No misconstruction? They say 'whispering tongues can poison truth.' What if we had an enemy?"

"My wife, how sad you look! What is the matter? What has come over you?"

He looked into my eyes, which were fixed on the distance, I tried to rouse myself at the sight of his anxiety.

"Oh, I don't know! Perhaps I am too happy, and so test everything to see if there is the slightest ring of sorrow in anything around me. I don't doubt you, Denis—I should as soon doubt that bright sky. But suppose you had chosen some one else. If Mary had lived, you would have been hers, and she was a thousand times better and lovelier than I. I am not mean enough to be jealous. No, I am glad that she loved you—glad you loved her and mourned her long and faithfully. Do not cease to love her memory, but——"

I stopped abruptly with that little shiver which an old woman's tale says is caused by the finding that some one is treading over your grave.

"What were you going to say, Sylvia?" Denis asked gravely.

For a moment I hesitated, and then I looked up and said impulsively:

"Some day you may regret that she and not I was taken from you. Ah, that will be dreadful!"

He threw his arms round me.

"Great Heaven, Sylvia, what makes you speak and look like that? Do you know half what is in your eyes?" He held me fast and went on passionately: "Do not I love you with the deepest love man has? You wrong me by your thoughts. I loved Mary well and faithfully, but she is dead, and I have my wife whom I love even more. Do not, I beseech you, conjure up the dead to stand between us. You are mine, and I am yours. What shall divide us?"

"Nothing, Denis"—and I took one of his hands in both mine and squeezed it. "I am hopeful again. It was a fit of morbidness, but it is over now. I am only a very happy and fortunate girl, who hopes there are many persons equally happy. Forgive your foolish wife, dear!"

This he did generously, and I leaned against him, happy and at peace again.

"Here is that tremendously long footman of yours coming towards us, walking, like Agag, delicately through the underwood," said Denis presently. "Confound the fellow, what does he want?"

The man brought a card. The lady wished to see me on very important business; she knew I was at home, for she told the man she had seen Mr. and Mrs. Fernley pass through the garden into the wood. Mrs. Escombe was not well, but had sent her.

Denis abused the servant for admitting her, my aunt for sending her, and the stranger for daring to come.

"And such an ugly name too. Look, Denis! Who can Mrs. Halse be? I'll drop an 'h' in her presence, or pick up a 'th,' just to vex her for teasing us. I will come, James. Oh, it is abominable taste in her to come so early! And I feel certain her business is only some district work."

"If she comes merely out of curiosity, dismiss her at once. I think I won't go in; she might stay longer, you know," he said persuasively.

"Oh, you shuffler!" I cried with affected indignation, but unable to help laughing at his look when he found his ruse detected. "No, stay and smoke your cigarettes while I bear Mrs. Halse company; that is division of labor." I picked up my parasol and went a few paces towards the house, when he followed me.

"I say, darling, what a bore this is! But we were too jolly to be left in peace. 'Love, jealous grown of such a perfect pair,' has sent this woman to disturb our comfort. Your morbid forebodings have quite infected me; I can't bear you out of my sight. I shall come after you if you do not return after twenty minutes by my watch."

I nodded, and went towards the house; before entering I looked back. He stood on the outskirt of the garden, and held up his watch as a reminder to me. I waved my hand to him gaily, and entered the house.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

In the Orangery.

BY ALBANY DE FONBLANQUE.

Ettie Wray was a most roguish young lady. Her truant taste led her into all kinds of frolics, for which her bright eyes and sunny smiles were always indemnification. She had brothers, of course. What wilful girls was ever without them? The elements of mirth and mischief could not be properly developed without such an incentive to their growth. Charles, the eldest of the family, had the advantage of her in age by three years. But she gave him few of the privileges of seniority. That luckless brother was in love; worse still, he was poetical; and Ettie was not slow to discover both weaknesses.

With her cheeks rosier than ever, her eyes alight with mirth, she darted through the house one frosty morning in the first days of the new year.

She was in search of her brother Charles. Without him matters were becoming dull, and that was a descent from elation which she could not brook. "Where is Charles?" she exclaimed impatiently, as she followed her mother to the store-closet. There was an outcry from that thrifty matron as a basket of fresh eggs was all but overturned by the girl's flying entrance.

"Ettie, do be more careful!" she exclaimed. "Is there nothing you can do but mischief?"

"Avoid it, you mean. I haven't cracked a shell. But, O mamma, please tell me where Charles is gone to."

"Certainly, if I know I should not do so, Ettie. You would be sure to distract him."

"Tiresome fellow!" she murmured. "He has done this to tease me. He is hiding from me on purpose." Then a thought dawned on her. "Ah, the grotto!" she cried.

This was a sort of log-hut at the far end of the garden, only used in winter time as a smoking lounge, and forbidden to Charles except at an idle evening hour.

Ettie gained the retreat, ran up a step or two, and, descrying that the truant was within, broke in upon him with startling rapidity.

He almost jumped from his seat, and something—not a cigar—fell from his grasp. It was a pen; a pocket inkstand was on the rustic table before him, and on his writing portfolio a sheet of pink paper was outspread. Though it seemed to him that he kept both a fixed glance and hold on this latter, it was spirited away before his very eyes. Ettie held it aloft, and soon his Muse was under the the scanning gaze of an unsparing critic.

"A valentine already!" was her first comment. "Well, Charles, you will score high in composition, at all events, unless it is to be a case of love's labor lost."

In a laughing voice, which gradually grew a little softened, Ettie read the stanzas aloud. They were addressed, "To my Queen."

"Not so bad, old fellow," she exclaimed at the conclusion. "Too good to be wasted after your own heart. You will let me direct your thoughts and your envelope?"

Now it must be noted that Ettie was in love too, and with a young lady likewise. But the object of her devotion was not the same fair one who had enchained her brother Charles. At her last words, with a sudden unexpected dexterity, the paper rescued from her, was transferred to the portfolio, and Charles shut the latter with a clap.

"Ettie you are a perfect torment!" he exclaimed. "I wont have you prying after me everywhere. Whatever I may be about, nonsense is your sole study."

"I am going, Charles," said Ettie, advancing as far as the threshold. "Just promise me first you'll not send those verses to Augusta Pryde."

"I shall send you down the steps if you don't take care," was the rejoinder, and the lover made a threatening movement and Ettie in mock fear retired.

Some weeks had gone by, and the household had been very quiet. Charles was really reading, and, strange to say, Ettie was meditating. But that was a bad omen for what might follow. She saw a great deal of her pet friend, Dora Darlington, and managed that her brother should do the same. Dora was slight and graceful figure, with a blooming color, soft gray eyes; and a sweet dimpled face; a perfect contrast to the somewhat stiff form and straight features of Augusta Pryde. But the latter had gained Charles Wray's admiration when he was a mere boy. She held him by the force of association, and his romantic turn of mind bound him to the belief that a first love must be unchanging.

St Valentine's eve approached, and it was to be a night of festivities. A dinner, a drama, and a dance were to follow in succession. It chanced to be Ettie's birthday, and if she had her way at other times, she could be denied nothing now. She had chosen the play herself, and not without a motive. The hero was in love with two young ladies. The one was uppermost in absence. In her presence he was the slave of the second. Torn by conflicting emotions, his reveries were given to one, his protestations to the other. The shallow arts and decked-out charms of the showy heroine vanished with her disappearance from the scene, and he was haunted by the winning ways of her more lovable rival. This wandering weakness brought matters to a climax in the end. He proposed by letter to the first lady, and the next moment, in an unexpected meeting, threw himself at the feet of the second. The plot afforded scope for some comical positions, and Ettie was delighted with it. Charles, should be the vacillating gentleman, and Augusta and Dora the heroines.

The night came; the mystery of the greenroom was at it height; and something else, unfortunately, too—discussion, even dissension. Some exquisite old 'point,' which had been displayed beforehand by Ettie, and which Miss Pryde understood was to be appropriated to her, hung now in graceful folds around the floating white of Dora Darlington.

Augusta was at length arrayed in the pink dress, and with the aid of some white flowers she toned down a little. Her countenance, nevertheless, did not clear till a new arrival, a young officer who was to act a subordinate part. She turned at once a 'cold shoulder' on Charles.

The play passed off satisfactorily, but nevertheless, the curtain had scarcely dropped before Ettie experienced a thrill of dismay. Charles stole up to Augusta and pressed something into her hand. The young lady took it carelessly, and it dropped the next instant to the ground. Ettie snatched it up, and read these words. "*Meet me, for one second, in the conservatory before the ball opens.*" She was not slow to guess what that meant. The same morning she had spied Charles in the act of arranging a few showy camellias. He had left the bouquet in a cool dark spot, but its fragrance plainly was to be hidden no longer.

The conservatory lay in shadow. There were no lights in it, for it was situated at the end of the library, a room not used on this night. Yet a fleck of moonshine had stolen in, and plants and flowers wore a dreamy beauty in its pallid gleam. But the moonlight was fitful. Gloom brooded elsewhere, and in that gloom stood Charles Wray. He was anxious and troubled, and a species of nervousness beset him now that the moment had approached for the presentation of the flowers he had culled so carefully and the verses which had been so ardently penned. Suddenly there was a sound. He moved a step forward and listened eagerly. Yes, some one had entered. It was she whom he awaited. Even here the glowing pink dress shone out aggressively, but its owner had thrown a white cloud over her hair, and was thus more approachable. Charles sprang towards her, and, without a word, pressed flowers and valentine into her hand. At the same instant a startling tone rang out. It was the first burst of the dance music. It seemed like a summons, and one which could not be disregarded. The young lady turned and fled.

Charles followed more leisurely, and when he entered the ballroom the full blaze of light bewildered him for an instant. He looked around then for Miss Pryde; she had probably a partner already, but ere she was engaged for everything he must put in a plea. But she had vanished, like Cinderella; not a trace of her was to be seen. The officer who had been in favor to-night was whirling around in the waltz with Dora Darlington. Yet stay, was he dreaming or dazzled? Was this Dora in the white lacy drapery who, pausing in the dance, raised her brilliant eyes to her partner's face? Surely, surely he knew that gaze too well ever to mistake it. It was Augusta Pryde, with the same smile which she had often given to him, the same compelling glance which had made him too long her captive. Charles felt that the play must still be going on, and that the strange metamorphoses of scenes and semblances were clouding and distracting his brain. A clear little laugh and a touch on the arm brought him to his senses. There was something in Ettie too unmistakably lifelike to let fantasies predominate, and it was she who was beside him.

"What is this?" he murmured. "Ettie, is it your freak? Where is Augusta—Dora, I mean? What has happened to every one?"

"To yourself, you should say. We are all right, and dear Dora better than ever. Fancy! she changed dresses with Augusta, just to please her ladyship. But she is well rewarded. She looks lovely in pink."

Ettie had turned as she spoke, and Charles followed her glance. In the embrasure of a window he discovered the gay garb, and saw that it enfolded the fairy form of Dora Darlington.

"Ettie!" ejaculated Charles, "what have I done? Who was it came to me in the orangery?"

"Have I to tell you? Oh! Charley, abjure poetry! You are becoming too obscure. I found this, and showed it to Dora. Was not that what you wished?" and she handed him his slip of paper containing the summons to the conservatory.

Charles took it without a word. If Miss Pryde had discarded both it and him, why should he publish his own rejection? At a moment like this, when enchanting strains were floating on the air, fragrant flowers entwining overheard, and a lovely little lady awaiting a partner, he would certainly forget everything but enjoyment. Another instant and the camellias were nestling close to the donor. Dora had given him her hand for the waltz, and he claimed it again and again.

Charles and Dora met often, and whether or no Ettie were the medium which effected the desired attraction, some mesmeric force was in play which none could resist. The poetical Charles yielded gradually to the spell, and allowed that there is something stronger than sentiment—the true bond of union between responsive hearts. Yet, faithful in a measure to first "principles," he persuaded himself that it was to Dora that the valentine had been indited. When he won his Eastern laurels, some few months later, he laid all at her feet.

FACETIÆ

"A trimming store"—The barber shop.

"Foul airs"—The proud strut of the peacock.

"A repeating rifle"—Robbing the same place twice.

The original Fall styles happened in the Garden of Eden.

The "home-stretch" in the human "race"—That across the maternal knee.

Never talk to a farmer with the foothache about the product of his bread and fertile acres.

One of the easiest ways to get a "greenback" is to lean up against a door that has just been painted that color.

It has long since been observed that in breezy weather straws (especially straw hats) show which way the wind blows.

Cincinnati claims to be one of the most intellectual cities in the Union. The business done in pork there at once explains her familiarity with the "pen."

A doctor's natural ability ceases when out hunting. On such occasions, whether among birds or animals, he can't kill any more than an ordinary man.

It is a fact that the nights are cool, but let no one on that account make sure of a good night's rest whilst the voice of the watermelon is to be heard in the land.

There are many arguments against early rising. In fact it is leaving their "beds" so soon that brings untimely death to such multitudes of hardy seasoned oysters.

Considering the number of wives he was willing to wed, modern thinkers are beginning to question the right of Solomon to be regarded as one of the wisest of mankind.

Despite the roving tendencies of the tramp, he is not fond of change. He will wear the same shirt from one year's end to the other, if he can't steal another in the meantime.

Man is naturally a fickle animal and it is therefore not surprising that this woman her he can look with more respect on the constancy and fidelity of a paper collar than he did a month since.

Among the Greeks the Fate that presided over the thread of Life was represented as bearing a pair of scissors. Among the ancient and modern Ethiopians the same agency carries a razor.

It is curious to observe that a physician's pills, boluses, etc., are round just like a pistol bullet, cannon ball, shell, etc. It is said by competent authorities this is the most effective shape for execution.

The custom of the Russian soldiers marching up to the work of blood to the music of singing, has its parallel in that Cossack of the insect world, the mosquito, doing precisely the same thing.

It is said that the drinking of lager beer is increasing at a tremendous rate yearly in the United States. After a while the only uses water will have is washing with and mixing in with milk.

One of the hardest problems of life, no doubt, for a man who has been off for a day's fishing and a good jolly time generally with some friends, is to explain to his inquiring wife how he happened to catch exactly six salt mackeral in a fresh water river.

Texas is sowing hemp quite extensively. Taken in connection with the fact that so many natives of that State are born to rise in the world, the statement is suggestive as illustrating the great law of demand and supply.

The time is now at hand when the subject of winter clothes becomes of supreme importance in masculine minds, and many husbands find out on resolving to make last season's overcoat and breeches do this year, that through his wife's use of some mysterious Italian agency they have taken the shape of a pair of plaster-of-Paris oats.

A boy wishes to grow up that he may go to see the girls like his big brother, but he never looks further in the perspective for the time when he may have the satisfaction of paying for the coal and kerosene consumed for the benefit of others of the rising generation in his turn. This is a gracious dispensation of Providence in blinding the eyes to some of the sternest facts of existence, until marriage opens them.

Secretary Sherman is trying to force the new dollar into circulation—compelling people to take it in fact. We have no desire to become mixed up in any financial controversy, but we know of several people in this neighborhood who will with great pleasure assist the eminent gentleman in making the forcing process as easy and light for him as possible. A wish to relieve the wheels of government of any unnecessary strain will always, we hope, mark the true patriot.

A Washington paper describes a young lady as having a face a painter might dwell upon. That would be a delightful residence, and if the painter should spill his pigments around plentiful, it might save the young lady some trouble.

"Sure, Prompt and Thorough, are the characteristics of Dr. Jayne's Carminative Balsam. Its merit has made it known everywhere for years, as a standard curative for Cramps, Diarrhœa, Cholera Morbus, and all Diseases of the Bowels: it is besides easily administered to children, being pleasant to the taste, and is entirely safe.

THE OLD HOME.

BY F. K. S.

O little house lost in the heart of the lindens,
What would I not give to behold you once more!
To inhale once again the sweet breath of your roses,
And the starry clematis that climbs best round your door!

To see the neat windows thrown wide to the sunshine,
The porch where we sat at the close of the day,
Where the weary foot traveler was welcome to rest him,
And the beggar was never sent empty away;

The wainscoted walls and the low raftered ceilings,
To hear the loud tick of the clock on the stair;
And to kiss the dear face bending over the bible,
That always was laid by my grandfather's chair!

O bright little garden beside the plantation,
Where the tall fleurs-de-lis their blue banners unfurled,
And the lawn was alive with the thrushes and blackbirds—
I would you were all I had known of the world!

My sweet pink pea-clusters! My rare honeysuckle!
My prim polyanthuses all of a row!
In a garden of dreams I still pass and caress you,
But your beautiful selves are forever laid low—

For your walls, little house, long ago have been levelled!
Alien feet your smooth borders, O garden, have trod;
And those whom I loved are at rest from their labors,
Reposing in peace on the bosom of God!

Ugly Danesbrook.

BY MAUD MURRAY.

Far and near, Dennis Danesbrook, of Shrop Hall, was known as "Ugly Danesbrook."

He was tall and lean, with a large head covered with coarse, bristly, red hair, whilst his face was disfigured by an ugly scar.

His remarkable ugliness was in no wise softened by his manners, which were rough and awkward to a degree. He had not been a resident of Shrop Hall more than a year at the period at which my tale commences.

He led a most retired life, and people did not seem at all inclined to make his acquaintance, in consequence of his uncanny appearance.

Yet he was a well-educated, superior man; wealthy and liberal in his dealings, as all who had any business transactions with him were ever ready to admit.

Now, this ugly man had, strange to say, a most beautiful wife.

She was dark-haired, with soft gray eyes that beamed with intelligence and good nature. Her movements were full of natural grace; her voice low-toned and musical; and a sweet smile lent a most bewitching charm to her lovely features.

Her husband, I could see, carried her on his hands. His distress of mind knew no bounds when she happened to make any trifling complaint regarding the state of her health.

As far as I could judge, she was deeply grateful for his tenderness and contented with her lot in life; as far as I could judge, I repeat.

As the young wife was naturally delicate, I was often summoned to her aid, and it was thus our acquaintance began.

Her sufferings were of a nervous nature; therefore I recommended her to take more frequent exercise in the open air, and to try and amuse her mind a little by society.

"What are you thinking of, Doctor?" she cried one day. "Society! My husband hates it!"

But I paid no attention to this, for I considered it my duty to represent her case truly to her good husband.

"If you advise her to mix more with society," he returned, "I shall be the last to object to it, though I must confess I am no lover of it."

And he kept his promise in this respect; and people were not a little surprised when Danesbrook and his wife made their appearance together in several drawing-rooms, to return some long-standing calls, and contracting new friendships.

Everybody was as pleased with Maud Danesbrook's manners as they were displeased with his; for they could not teach themselves to overcome his unsightly exterior.

Nevertheless, there were two or three families with whom Mr. Danesbrook appeared to be on a more friendly footing. One of these was the widow of a military officer, and his nearest neighbor, who entertained a real attachment for Mrs. Danesbrook, and who took her husband into the bargain, notwithstanding that he was not to her mind either.

Now the widow had a son (her only child) in the army.

His regiment was stationed in London, where the young man led a most disreputable life. But his mother loved him with all a loving mother's tenderness, although he had caused her many a bitter pang by his dissolute conduct.

In order to remove him from the evil influence of bad companions, his mother persuaded him to exchange into another regiment, stationed in a quieter place.

Before he joined it, the widow begged him to come and spend the holidays with her at her home in Surrey.

A trifling change had taken place in the Danesbrook household in the meantime.

When I paid my patient a visit one day, I found a young girl staying with her, who was introduced to me as a distant relative who had consented to be a companion to Mrs. Danesbrook till she should have recovered from her nervous depression of spirit.

This girl's name was Julia, and the brilliant brunette, with her red lips, black eyes, and rather coquettish manner, formed a decided contrast to the gentle-eyed Maud.

Always in high spirits, she seemed destined to work a great change in Mrs. Danesbrook's quiet household.

Christmas was approaching, and I had received an invitation from Danesbrook to assist in a grand festival, to which he was going to treat all his farmer tenants.

He threw open all his large rooms, decorated them expensively, and had summoned a capital brass band from London.

At length the eventful evening arrived. The earth was covered with deep snow, and everything was seasonable and agreeable.

Carriages bearing rich neighbors, on one hand, came bowling along; then, on the other, light carts and wagons rattled up to, and discharged their contents at, the hospitable door, now opened wide to all.

Amongst the assembled guests I noticed Mrs. Cottrell and her son Claude.

Mrs. Danesbrook also mixed amongst the dancers.

She, too, danced several times with the fascinating Lieutenant, whilst her husband stood moodily in a corner, following the pair about everywhere with his lowering glances.

I could not remain till the end myself, so I asked a servant to order my carriage to be brought around unknown to all, and stole away unperceived.

When I next visited Shrop Hall, I found Mr. Danesbrook looking more gloomy than usual, his wife suffering from her old complaint, and light-hearted Julia met me with swollen eyelids.

As soon as I was alone with my patient, she told me that there had been some angry words in the family on account of Lieutenant Cottrell, who had, according to Mrs. Danesbrook's story, been flirting with Julia, who had been persuaded to meet him in the park grounds.

Now, unfortunately, this story, with the usual exaggerations, travelled abroad, and awakened afresh the scarcely sleeping prejudice against Ugly Danesbrook.

It was generally believed that he fancied the Lieutenant to be in love with his own beautiful wife, and that he only pretended a passion for the girl in order to avert suspicion from the true object of his affection.

In fact, the wildest reports were in circulation with regard to a late interview between the two men; and people declared that Danesbrook had uttered terrible threats, swearing that he would some day have his revenge.

One morning early, a mounted messenger from the Danesbrooks came to summon me in all haste.

The messenger told me that a terrible tragedy had occurred there.

Going there, I found the house in the wildest confusion and alarm, Mr. Danesbrook in the hands of a couple of policemen, and his wife in violent hysterics.

The inspector of police who was present begged me to examine the wounds of Lieutenant Cottrell, who had been found bleeding and insensible close to Shrop Hall.

Nobody doubted that this was the work of an intended assassin, and that Danesbrook was the guilty man.

I approached the wounded soldier, who showed no sign of life save a low, irregular breathing.

On closer examination I discovered a wound on his head.

I fancied the ball must have entered the brain; and in that case there was, of course, no earthly hope for him.

One of the male domestics volunteered the following statement:

He stated that he had been aroused out of his sleep by the barking of one of the house-dogs, and that he had risen, fearing lest someone was trying to enter the house for an evil purpose.

He opened the principal door, and looked round about, throwing around the rays of his lighted lantern, which he held aloft over his head. But as it was bright moonlight, he soon found his lantern useless, and so cast it away from him.

By-and-by, close by the grand portico, he distinctly saw a dark figure creeping amongst the laurel bushes.

Before, however, he could reach him, another figure in whom he fancied he recognized his master, had met the first man.

Then he heard angry voices, and next a shot, upon which the first man dropped to the ground, whilst the other vanished he knew not whither.

Upon his cry for help, and after repeated ringings at the door-bell, his master, dressed and armed with a revolver, stepped forth to him.

After hearing this story, the inspector ordered Danesbrook to enter a vehicle waiting for him.

The gentleman repeated over and over again his protestations of innocence; but no attention was paid to him, and he was carried off to prison.

I myself remained behind to comfort and attend to the wants of the unhappy wife and the wounded man.

His further treatment, if such could be of any possible use, I resigned into the hands of his mother's own doctor.

Everybody seemed convinced of Danesbrook's guilt, except his own wife, who vouched for his innocence, and thus convinced me of her deep attachment for her husband; showing that our suspicions with regard to the young Lieutenant were entirely without foundation.

As soon as she had recovered herself she left home, and engaged lodgings in the town, in the prison of which her husband was confined.

A few weeks before the trial was to take place, the young officer's doctor came to see me, and made some interesting facts known to me respecting the case of the wounded man, who was, contrary to all expectation, still alive, but in constant danger.

My colleague begged me to attend a consultation with him and a celebrated surgeon, whom he had already summoned.

At the appointed time I proceeded to Mrs. Cottrell's residence, where I found both the surgeons waiting.

The patient's consciousness was almost entirely gone. His right side was wholly paralyzed; so, also, was his tongue, which could utter only unintelligible sounds.

He knew neither his mother, nor any other person.

After a long and careful examination of the patient, the London surgeon drew us apart. He proposed performing a certain operation upon him, at which I and my colleague shook our heads.

"We will do our best," answered the great man. "If his mother consents to it, it had better be done at once."

Of course, Mrs. Cottrell snatched at the proposal, as it afforded her a faint ray of hope; and the operation was performed, and, as I thought, successfully.

We dared to hope now, although the danger was by no means past.

Meanwhile, Danesbrook's trial was fast approaching. He was still in prison, but his position was not so perilous now, as his supposed victim still lived. Yet the Lieutenant's complete recovery was a matter of great doubt in all our minds.

An agent of the law had waited upon me, in order to learn from me whether the young man would be in a condition to appear as principal witness against the prisoner.

After talking over the matter with my colleague, I answered in the affirmative. In consequence of this, a solicitor accompanied me to the Cottrells' residence.

In our presence the mother prepared her son for the object of our visit.

At first he seemed hardly to comprehend her; but after a time our questions awakened his slumbering memory, and his recollections became livelier each moment; his replies clearer and more decided.

We were all most eager to hear his statement—a statement which would confirm the guilt or otherwise of Ugly Danesbrook.

"What were you loitering about Shrop Hall for on that memorable night?" asked the lawyer, after a few introductory words. "I must impress upon your mind the necessity of speaking the truth, as you will have to swear to your words."

"I was there to meet someone," replied the Lieutenant.

"At midnight? Whom were you there to meet?"

"A woman's good name and honor are at stake. You must, therefore, excuse my making a confession that would compromise a third person."

"The law admits of no sort of reservations. You must honestly disclose everything."

For a minute the young man remained silent. He was evidently at a loss what to say.

We all of us felt convinced that it was the name of Mrs. Danesbrook that he was desirous of shielding.

"Tell the truth, Claude!" entreated his mother. "Who was this woman with whom you had an assignation?"

"Julia Leyland," murmured the son, slowly.

"Julia Leyland!" repeated all, in surprise.

"Mrs. Danesbrook's young companion!" questioned the lawyer.

"The same," acknowledged the Lieutenant. "I had begged her to meet me in the park that night, as Mr. Danesbrook had refused me admission to his house in consequence of a quarrel we had with one another."

"And did Mr. Danesbrook meet you, and ask your business on his grounds?"

"The person whom I so unexpectedly encountered there was not Mr. Danesbrook," the Lieutenant rejoined.

"Reflect well over what you say," remarked the questioner; "and remember that everything depends upon your evidence."

"Oh, I know what I am talking about, and am sure that the person I met on that night was not the owner of Shrop Hall, but another!"

"Another! Who could it have been if it were not Mr. Danesbrook?"

"The former agent, who had been dismissed," he replied.

We all started in amazement.

"Yes, the man was in love with Miss Leyland, and lay in wait for me. I had offended him a few days before, and, enraged with jealousy, he barred my way; and as I tried to push him aside he fired a pistol at me. I remember dropping upon the ground, and nothing more."

"You are certain of what you say? You can swear that it was the agent, Ormond, who fired the pistol at you?"

"I can and will do so," replied the Lieutenant.

The Lieutenant appeared to me like one who had been awakened from a death-like trance, taking up his thoughts from the time at which he had fallen asleep, as if he had only been dozing for a few hours, and as though the workings of his mind had scarcely been disturbed.

I will not attempt to describe Mrs. Danesbrook's joy when the young Lieutenant's evidence was communicated to her; and I need hardly say that the prisoner was at once released.

The whole neighborhood, ashamed of its prejudice, was not slow to prove the sympathy and respect it really felt for the long abused man.

Mrs. Cottrell, too, paid him a visit and rendered him the apology to which he was entitled.

Notwithstanding the successful operation, Lieutenant Cottrell died a few months afterwards.

The real murderer, for such he may be called, managed to get off safely to America, where he wrote a full confession to his late employer, and to Julia Leyland, who deeply suffered for her thoughtlessness and folly.

A Night of Danger.

BY A. I. S.

Riding hard and fast, almost as for dear life, along the wilds of the vast prairie, I found myself to my intense astonishment, entering upon a straggling settlement, and pulled up to reconnoitre and consider.

That I had missed my way was all too plain; for, on the course that I ought to have come, there was not a cabin or a single settler.

Almost any traveller in the border sections would have been rejoiced to thus stumble unexpectedly upon a place where food and shelter might be obtained. At another time I should have been so myself. Not now.

In the breast pocket of my closely-buttoned coat I carried five thousand four hundred and ninety odd dollars, United States money. It was during our time of war. This money had been given into my charge to carry it without stopping, and by the most unfrequented route, to one of the forts, and place it in the hands of Colonel Southard, who was waiting for it.

But here I was, having lost my route, and not knowing whether I was safe or not—at least, whether the money would be. And now that I had blundered on to the verge of this scanty settlement, what must be my course? Should I halt for refreshment, as any ordinary traveller would; or should I ride straight through without stopping?

The latter course might of itself excite suspicion. So, pushing on to the house of entertainment with the most careless air I could assume, I got off my horse.

There were only two men in the bar-room when I entered, the landlord and the hostler. I ordered supper, and sat down.

Two travellers next rode up and ordered drinks. One of them went with the hostler, the other threw himself down on a bench outside and began filling a huge pipe.

Strolling carelessly about the room, I managed to glance from the window. My heart leaped into my throat, for in the man seated there I recognized Bill Wolf, one of the most desperate characters that ever figured in the annals of border ruffianism.

I sat down again and went through the form of eating my supper; but whatever appetite I might have felt on my entrance to the inn had vanished now.

Presently the men came in together and ordered supper. Mine was finished, and now was my chance to leave.

Paying my score, and saying a general good evening, I crossed the dim smoky bar-room. They took no notice of me whatever; only the landlord looked furtively after me. My spirits rose; I hoped my fears had misled me, and that I should get safe away.

It was quite dark outside, but the hostler was flitting about the stable with his lantern; he brought out my steed, and I trotted away.

I was feeling infinitely relieved at my providential escape from contact with the desperate characters whom I had left at the settlement, when my acute ears detected the sound of swift riding.

I drew up my horse one moment to listen. On they came. No chance travellers ever rode like that. It meant pursuit.

I gave my steed a lash and he broke into a convulsive gait, bore his body up with one or two plunges, stumbled, and pitched me literally heels over head.

What was the matter with the horse? He had a white spot on his face, and this seemed to come off on my hand as I touched him. A wet, slimy, sticky substance, bearing a remarkable resemblance to whitewash. With my heart in my mouth I stooped to feel his white legs and feet. Yes, they were whitewashed too! The trappings had been taken off my own horse at the inn, and transferred to this worthless animal, which had been whitewashed over to imitate mine.

This discovery brought an appalling interpretation of the oncoming horsemen. I gave the horse the whip as soon as his unstable legs were well under him, and sent him scouring on ahead; while I ran off on foot to the right, making for a little hollow that I discerned in the distance. It proved to be a shallow, dry ravine; and here, to my profound astonishment, I discovered a low cabin, or hut, about the dimensions of an ordinary country log-house.

Dashing up to this, I gave a rapid succession of knocks. A shrinking, pale, and cowering woman opened the door.

"What is it?" was her first question, noticing my breathless haste.

"Is there any chance to hide here? My horse has thrown me, and I believe a party of desperadoes are close up with me."

She mechanically closed the door behind me, before I had finished my explanation.

"No, no; there is no place!" she gasped, her ear catching the sound of the coming horsemen. "This is all there is: this one room."

My eyes had been seeking for a place of concealment, but in vain. Suddenly they rested on a dark object in the far corner.

"But this?—what's this!" I exclaimed, making a rush for it.

"It's a coffin. Get in, quick."

I had barely time to place myself in this receptacle for the dead, when the hoarse voice of Bill Wolf was heard outside.

"Here, you Dick!—Is Dick here?"

The woman opened the door.

"He has not come back yet!" she replied.

"Oh, not yet! Jenny, have you heard a horse go by yonder?"

"Yes, just now."

"Driving on like the devil—eh!"

"Going fast," she answered. "You might perhaps hear its hracks still," she added.

But Bill Wolf must have been of a suspicious nature. I heard him leap from his horse. For the life of me I could not help pushing up the coffin lid and looking through the chink.

A fire was burning on the stone hearth. Bill Wolf had a hand on each door-post. His brutal head was thrust inside the room peering about.

"What's that?" he questioned, pointing to my retreat.

"It is Staffer's coffin," she answered. "Are you in pursuit of the man gone by?"

"Ay. But what's it to you if we are? He can't have gone far, either, as that animal."

Riding away in search of me and of what I carried, Wold clattered off.

The woman watched him join two comrades, who had waited at a little distance; then she came in and barred the door.

I was out of the coffin in a trice.

I looked around in despair. To go out was fatal, and to stay in meant discovery, probably death. The coffin was no longer available, for Dick was coming for it.

"Stay, there's the rain barrel outside," said I, in desperation. "They've tried that once; they may not look at it again."

And before you would be able to speak a sentence, the water was dashed out of the cask, and I was in the barrel, the woman dropping a tub half filled with water in at the top as a cover.

She had barely time to re-enter the house, the door of which fortunately opened on the side away from the moon, when a rattling vehicle drew up at the door, and I heard a hoarse voice raving and swearing at the woman for something done, or undone; and then from the bunghole, the plug having been dislodged by the upsetting of the cask, I saw the furious return of the three other renegades.

There ensued a good deal of loud talking, explanations and oaths.

A jorum of hot nectar was prepared, and they all went in to partake of it.

Dick refused to join in the hunt after me, on account of having to take the coffin to its destination.

At that moment a wild and desperate plan entered my brain.

The horses of the three renegades—my own, which had been retained by the hostler at the inn, among them—were hitched on the other side of the door, where the moonlight, striking by the end of the cabin, rested fully upon them. It was suicide to attempt seizing one of them—my own, as I had hoped to do—and riding off. So I embraced the only alternative—leaping from the barrel (the tub having been removed to water the horses with) and creeping into the wagon, and getting inside the coffin again, which had been put in it.

Dick came out, and the three others mounted, and all were about to start, when the woman ran out with some sort of a blanket, for she had seen me enter the wagon, and muttered something about covering the coffin.

Dick yelled out to her to mind her business and let the thing alone.

But she succeeded in accomplishing her purpose. Disposing the blanket across the coffin, as he was beginning to drive away, she contrived to lift its lid and drop inside a bowie-knife.

You may be sure I seized it heartily, and gave her a blessing, too, poor thing; and the first use I made of it was to lodge the lid up just a fraction; so that my breathing was easy, though my position was cramped.

They kept within hailing distance for some three or four miles, Dick driving the heavy wagon along at a steaming pace, and I expected that the coffin would be jostled out.

By-and-by, there was a sudden shout, a loud "tally-ho," as if the huntsmen had sighted the quarry. It came from the gang.

No sooner was the noise heard, than my driver threw the reins across the horse, leaped down, and started off towards his friends. Perhaps the temptation of the money (that they might be then dividing) was too much for him.

In a moment I sprang from the coffin to the ground. A few lightning-like strokes and I had severed the traces and the rude bands of the harness.

I mounted the horse and urged him onwards.

All might have been well, had not the quick ears of the men caught the echo of his footsteps.

Looking round, they saw me making off—and I think must have known me, for I was lighted up by the bright moonlight.

With a wild shout they came on in pursuit. There was the sharp report of two rifles. I felt a sting in my foot, another in my shoulder; but the horse was unharmed, and the race for life began.

The issue, I knew, would rest chiefly with the horses.

I knew nothing of the one which I rode; I knew nothing of those who were pursuing me, except ting my own horse.

On, and on, and on, my steed bore ahead, actually causing me to gasp for breath; and not two hundred yards in the rear rode those would-be assassins.

A momentary dizziness threw me forward on my horse's neck. Whether I should have yielded to the faintness, I know not, but a distant sound struck on my ear and brought me up.

Oh, it was good, that sound!—but I was not quite sure yet. I broke into the wild, long, fierce yell of the border rangers, and sped on again; but my horse had that peculiar twist now and then in his gait that told me he was faltering.

Again that echo reached me. It was the shrill music of the fife and the rumble of the drums of the infantry, who were probably returning to the fort from some expedition.

Again I sent out that wild cry, which I knew the soldiers heard, and were coming to my aid.

A parting shot, and my two pursuers turned: they could not face the soldiers. But I called my horse by a peculiar whistle that he knew, and he came toward me in spite of his rider, who was Wolf, who only gave up the fruitless struggle and leaped from his back as a squad of infantry appeared on the scene.

"It is Wolf," I panted. "Go in pursuit of him."

There was no need to urge them. A price was set on Wolf's head, as they knew, for he was the most dangerous and desperate outlaw of the time.

Then I fainted, and when my eyes opened again they fell on Mr. Wolf—a prisoner. Our men had brought him in to receive his deserts.

As for myself, I was saved, and the money also.

"It was a near touch, Captain," observed one of the men to me; "and I should not have liked the coffin at all."

But it was the coffin that saved my life.

THE WEEPING WILLOW.—The willow of Babylon, or our English weeping willow, is a native of the Levant, the coast of Persia and other places in the East. The manner of its introduction into England is curious; the account is as follows: Pope, the celebrated poet, having received a present of Turkey figs, observed a twig of the basket in which they were packed putting out a shoot. The twig he planted in his garden; it soon became a fine tree, and from this stock all our weeping willows have descended. This species of willows is generally planted by a still pool, to which it is a beautiful appropriate ornament; and when, in misty weather drops of water are seen distilling from the extremities of its branches, nothing can be more descriptive than the title has obtained of the weeping willow.

DEATH BY DROWNING.—*The Popular Science Monthly*, in an interesting article on Death by Drowning, gives the following hint, which our friends may like to make a note of: "If death by drowning be inevitable, as in a ship-wreck, the easiest way to die would be to suck water into the lungs by a powerful inspiration as soon as one went beneath the surface. A person who had the courage to do this would probably become almost immediately unconscious and never rise to the surface. As soon as the fluid filled his lungs, all feelings of chilliness and pain would cease, the indescribable semi-delirium that accompanies anæsthesia would come on, with ringing in the ears and delightful visions of color and light, while he would seem to himself to be gently sinking to rest, on the softest of beds and with the most delightful of dreams."

THE value and significance of the human race is hardly appreciated in our industrial life. So many of us are intent upon the same thing that all our forces have but one meaning. So much monotony, very often ignoble, is tiresome. We are classified by our life, and fall under a type—either the clerical, the mercantile, or the political type. The unending succession of variations of these types is not stimulating to artists or poets. The novelist to find a subject which interests him has to go down to the vagabond and picturesque classes. He carefully avoids the respectable. This class may "point a moral," but cannot "adorn a tale."

IT is an unfortunate fact that the use of laudanum as a drink is fast increasing. In most cases it is used with alcohol, to lessen the irritating effect of this drug, or the results of excessive abuse, as a sedative, or as a stimulant. In England a favorite preparation used after drinking is called "Pick me up." In some large cities, druggists give compounds of laudanum and ginger under fanciful names, and these are resorted to always after, in place of alcohol. This accounts for the enormous sales of opium, of which not over one fifth is used in medicine.

THE LATEST FLIRTATION.—The last thing out in fashionable frivolities is the language of the hair. A certain arrangement of *chevelure* means one thing, and a different arrangement another thing; so that by these means "a message may be conveyed to a favored one across a crowded ball-room without a word being uttered. By the favored one is meant, of course, the fair one's distant worshipper, so that while she is herself significantly hirsute, she is also encouraging his suit. But it seems after all much ado about nothing.

CURIOUS FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE.—The following table contains a curious summary of the English version of the Bible. The Old Testament contains 39 books, 929 chapters, 23,214 verses, 592,493 words and 2,728 100 letters. The new Testament contains 27 books, 260 chapters 7,959 verses, 181,253 words and 838,000 letters.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

NEW SOLDERING IRON.—A novel soldering iron was recently described before the Academy of Sciences, Paris. Its distinctive feature is a platinum receptacle, in which heat is instantaneously generated with air and petroleum spirits or air and coal gas.

STEEL TOW LINES.—A western paper says that steel tow lines are becoming popular on the lakes. They are found to work well. Of a line recently imported, the paper says that it is 600 feet long and weighs less than 800 pounds, and is made of the best crucible steel.

MATCHING OF COLORS.—Matching of colors by ordinary artificial light has been a difficult and an uncertain process. An eminent foreign authority strongly recommends the use of the electric light in dye-works, as it permits colors to be compared as accurately as by daylight.

ATMOSPHERIC ELECTRICITY AND PLANTS.—Late experiments go to show that atmospheric electricity plays a considerable part in vegetation. Plants withdrawn from its action developed from 30 to 60 per cent. less of living matter than those of the same kind fully exposed and with the same facilities for growth. The proportion of ash was higher, and that of water lower, in the plants unaffected by electricity than in those that were affected.

A NEW PROCESS.—The arts of utilization have now been extended to the extraction of the oil from the waste leather of factories—the old belts, cards and so forth—which are usually thrown aside as worthless, being so saturated with oil as to render their further use impracticable, thus resulting in serious loss to manufacturers. The new process of utilization not only restores the leather to usefulness but the oil extracted is valuable as a lubricator, much superior to fish oil.

ELECTRIC BRIDLE.—Some experiments have been made at Brussels in breaking horses by means of an electric arrangement known as the Engstrand bridle. Through two reins electric wires run, and at the ends of the reins there is a small electric battery under the control of the operator. By pressing a little knob the current acts on the horse's mouth. Very intractable animals are said to become quite docile after receiving a few consecutive shocks; and when horses run away they may be brought to a standstill in a very short time by giving them a shock or two.

EARTHQUAKE INDICATOR.—An ingenious seismograph or earthquake recorder was invented as early as 1750 years ago by a Japanese named Choko. It consisted of an ornamented cylinder eight feet high. Encircling the upper portion was a series of eight dragons' heads, in the open mouths of which were nicely balanced copper balls, one in each. A system of levers and springs in the interior was so arranged that the slightest movement of the earth would push a ball from one of the dragons' heads. The ball fell into the open mouth of the image of a frog, which was beneath each dragon's head, and the noise thus made would attract the notice of an attendant, who would tell the direction of the shock by observing the position from which the ball dropped. So sensitive was this instrument that distant earthquakes, not otherwise perceptible in the place where it stood, were indicated by it.

FARM AND GARDEN.

SHEEP ON LAND.—Sheep are the only animals which do not exhaust the land upon which they feed, but permanently improve the soil.

CHEAP FERTILIZER.—A fertilizer that needs no analysis to demonstrate its value, can be made by adding plenty of dirt to the stable manure and turning in a number of hogs to work it over.

"SCALY LEG" IN POULTRY.—The minute parasite that occasions the whitish scurf known as "scaly leg" in poultry, may be killed with carbolic soap suds, or sulphur and lard applied as a salve.

AGRICULTURE IN ENGLAND.—Agriculture is said to be declining in Great Britain. The number of cattle, the wheat acreage and other crops are decreasing, and very nearly one-half the population of the United Kingdom is now dependent for food upon importations from abroad. The people hope that an exhibition now proposed will revive the drooping business.

SOOT IN MANURE.—Soot contains ammonia, gypsum, nitric acid, and certain other substances, to which its well known effects on vegetation are mainly due. Soot acts advantageously on root crops. English experiments show that 56 bushels of soot, mixed with six of common salt, produced larger crops of carrots than 24 tons of farmyard manure, with 24 bushels of bones in addition.

RIPENING WHEAT.—It is a fact first observed and made known by an English farmer and agricultural writer, and widely confirmed by many experiments during several years past, that the later stages of the ripening process diminish the proportion of flour and the nutritive value of wheat. The time to secure the best grain is when the kernel is still soft enough to be crushed, but is comparatively free from moisture, and breaks into meal between the thumb nails.

BUGS ON PLANTS.—An English plan for the destruction of scale, etc., on plants is simply to syringe them, when infested with bugs and scale, with a solution of a wine glassful of paraffine oil to four gallons of water. The oil and water must be kept thoroughly mixed with the syringe—one charge into the can and one on the plant. It has been used on oranges, gardenias, crotons and many other plants that had bugs and scale on them, and while it will not injure the young leaves in the least, it is certain death to the insects.

FEMININITIES.

Catharine de Medici invented the side-saddle.

Woman lost us one paradise, but she often makes another for us wherever she goes.

The London *Queen* says the demand of the times is for a woman who can teach women.

An old bachelor's nearest approach to real happiness is when he dreams he is married.

Often the person whose death is most deeply regretted by a man's second wife is his first.

A Pittsburg woman prays in so loud a tone that her neighbors had her arrested for disorderly conduct.

When a boy becomes ashamed to sit on his mother's lap, he's probably in business for himself—holding somebody else on his lap.

Men of genius make the best husbands; a fool has too good an opinion of himself, and too poor a one of women, to be easily governed.

The lady looks oldest who tries to conceal her age. If she refuses to let her age be upon her tongue, it will be all the more upon her face.

Men are made to be eternally shaken about, but women are flowers that lose their beautiful color and freshness in the noise and tumult of life.

When you hear a lot of women at a watering-place hotel slandering another, you may be sure that she has a better wardrobe than they, and minds her own business.

A young lady will sit in the dark with a big beau beside her, for hours at a time, but you could not get her to put her nose in the cellarway after six o'clock at night for love or money.

"What good is they, anyway?" scornfully asked a bootblack, referring to the fair sex. "Did yer ever know one of 'em to stop and give a feller a job? They ha'n't got no shoes on what's fit to be blackened—that's what I think."

A raving lunatic in an asylum in California was restored to reason by seeing her father, from whom she had been long separated. But we know a man who was brought to reason by hearing his wife's voice in an adjoining room.

A leading paper says, speaking of the education of women: "Part of the drill of every school ought to be the reception by a wife in an old gown, at a dinner of corned beef and cabbage, of an unlooked for guest, thoughtlessly brought home by a reckless husband."

When thinking of matrimony, look more than skin deep for beauty, dive further than the pocket for worth, and search for temper beyond good humor for the moment, remembering it is not always the most agreeable partner at a ball who makes the most suitable partner for life. Virtue blooms fairest in the shade, often.

THE COBBLER'S CHILDREN.

One winter's eve, not long ago,
A simple little tale I heard,
The providence of God to show;
And it is true, each single word.

In Russia, where the rivers freeze,
The snow in masses lies about;
It covers up the tops of trees,
And sometimes none dare venture out.

In Petersburg a cobbler dwelt,
A simple man who feared the Lord,
And with his wife and children knelt
Before Him, and oft read His word.

His home was on the Neva's banks,
In a poor cellar underground;
And there he offered God his thanks
For numerous blessings he had found.

One day, with work that he had done,
The father and the mother went;
They thought that they could quickly run
Across the town—such their intent.

Their little children twain they told
To play upon the cottage floor,
And then they hurried through the cold,
Nor thought of coming grief in store.

In northern regions, as you know,
A sudden thaw will sometimes come;
And then the rivers overflow
And enter suddenly one's home.

And such a thaw there came that day,
Submerging portions of the town;
And while the parents were away,
In to the cellar it poured down.

The cobbler knew 'twas all in vain
To struggle through the waters now;
The mother gave a cry of pain,
And anguish wrung the father's brow.

"There is but One can help," said he;
"There's aid in the Almighty's arm."
Then down they fell on bended knee,
And rose with spirits soothed and calm.

At last the waters did subside;
Then anxiously they both explore,
And hastily fling open wide,
They fear, the death concealing door.

The water mark was very plain,
A foot beneath the chamber's top:
And then their spirits sank again,
And all their pulses seemed to stop.

They looked now for their children dear,
And saw them on a table laid;
Then tremblingly they both drew near:
To hope at all they were afraid.

On gently touching them, they knew
They were alive. The father said,
"Through God, most merciful and true,
Alone it is, they are not dead."

They waked the children, who began
To tell them what had passed that day,
Narrating every little plan,
And all their simple games of play.

They said, "When first the waters came,
To sail our boats was all our care;
And when it wet our shoes, our aim
Was next to mount upon a chair."

"After a time it got so deep,"
The eldest said, "while we were able,
We did our very best to creep,
Sister and I, upon the table.

"Then lying down, we slept in peace
Until you waked us, mother dear.
And now will all the waters cease,
And is there nothing we need fear?"

The father and the mother gazed
Upon their rescued babes with awe;
In wonderment they stood amazed—
God's hand in this they plainly saw.

The children, guided from above,
So rested that they balanced well;
And while they calmly slept in love,
The table gently rose and fell.

Upon the water it had been
Floating for hours amidst the flood;
Unharmed they were, but not unseen,
And now in perfect safety stood.

"Beauty and the Beast."

He was a beast—so the boys said—a lean, starved, black dog, with shaggy hair and hungry eyes. He had been about the village for days past, and nobody knew where he came from. Perhaps some one going by on the road through the hills had lost him there on purpose, not wanting to have such an ugly dog any more. The children were afraid of him, for he looked half a great hound, half wolf, when he faced round and snarled, and showed his long yellow teeth. He had no name. How could he have a name when he had no home and no owner? The village lads laughed at him, and called him "the Beast" and the smith and the man who kept the public-house at the cross-roads both agreed that "the Beast" ought to be shot or drowned or he might bite some of the children.

Little May was the child of the smith. She was a bonny, rosy mite of three years old, with a big printed calico sun-bonnet poking out round her face, traces of treacle making her hands and face what she called "nasty sticky" in the afternoons, and a pinafore that would not keep clean. The rough blacksmith believed there was nothing in the world so precious as May, and when she ran in and out of the smithy, and laughed at his sparks from the iron, and then cried with fear at the roaring bellows, he would throw aside his hammer, and give her a hug in his arms, and a toss up high to the black beams of the roof; and perhaps that was how the pinafore never kept clean.

Little May and two small boys were having bread-and-jam one sunny day by the stream. It was a clear stream from the hills, widening here, in a quiet little wood, and foaming away over great smooth stones.

One of the little fellows left his bread-and-jam, and went barefoot into the water to wade, and so did the other little fellow then, and of course toddling May wriggled her small fat feet out of her shoes and socks and stepped into the cool water too, where it was shallow, and she could hold on by the grassy bank. They had left some bread on the bank, and May's piece of bread-and-jam, nibbled into points all around the edge, lay on top of her pretty new doll. But all at once out of the wood came the ugly dog, and off he rushed, not only with May's bread, but with the doll too, for, opening his big mouth to take the food, he had caught the doll's dress as well; and away he ran down the bed of the stream, splashing and plashing among the foam where the children could not follow him. There on top of a rising mossy rock, in the middle of the broadest, deepest part, he swallowed the bread all in one munching bite, but the doll he had dropped into the water; and May toddled home barefooted, crying, with her knuckles in her eyes, and the two little boys followed with two socks and a shoe—the other shoe had rolled into the water when the poor little thing was scrambling out of the shallows.

May's mother, in the cottage beside the smithy, comforted her with a great lump of toffee that made her very sticky indeed. But the toffee was soon gone, and what was the good of it! So she cried for the doll again. But the two little boys were strictly warned not to take the child with them into the stream again, for she might be very soon drowned there, the mother said.

"I'll shoot that dog!" the smith said, with a stamp of his foot, when he heard about the doll. "If the bread had been in our baby May's hand, he would have bitten her hand off just the same way as he carried away the doll with the bread."

Little May grieved yet for her doll, and the two boys went next day to the stream "to see," as they said, "if they could fish it out," and they took her with them. But on the bank they ran away from her, in chase of a beautiful red-and-black butterfly, and she was all alone. Poor little thing! not four years old yet, how could she remember what mamma had said to the boys, and how could she resist going into the water, shoes and stockings and all, when she thought she saw the doll's head bob up above the surface a little way out?

She went in with unsteady little feet, and the water ran deeper and swifter, and she staggered, and her dress was wet up to her waist, and it was not the doll's head she saw at all, but a little floating tangle of grass. Then she tried to get back to the bank, and her baby foot slipped into a deeper part of the stream-bed, and down she went into the water. There was no one to save her, even the boys were out of sight, and when she scrambled to her feet, crying out loud, and staggered on a step or two, she only went deeper, and into a swift foamy current, and she was carried away where the stream boiled and swept round and down with a rush. Poor little mite! which would she be—drowned, or killed with a dash against the stones?

Neither; she will not be drowned or hurt! She must not, if four shaggy paws running from the wood at a swinging panting pace can be in time to save her. Yes; the stray dog, the poor hunted "Beast," plunged into the stream, and pulled out the heavy little bundle of wet clothes. Yes, she was saved. The boys came back just in time to see the rescue, and when they reached the spot they found her lying among the grass crying, with "the Beast" sitting by her watching, and giving her face a lick now and then, as if he was sorry to see her in trouble, and wanted to tell her there was no fear now.

They all went home together, and little May was put to bed lest she might catch cold. The dog stood outside wagging his tail, and looking as if he wondered what he should do next, or where could he get a bit to eat. When the smith came out, the dog started and ran away with his tail down, but he was called back, not to be shot, but to get a good plate of food, and an invitation to lie by the smithy fire. And that evening he was not turned out. No, nor the next evening, nor the next, and no one in the village dared say a word against the dog the smith had taken in.

He belonged to May, and lived between the smithy and the cottage, sometimes in one place, sometimes in the other, but always welcome. And little May called him her darling, and hugged him, and let him poke his big black nose in under her sun-bonnet; but the wonder was that he never showed his teeth now, or growled. He was as gentle as could be; his coat became less and less shaggy and ragged, and grew thick and black; and his eyes were big, brown, and wistful, not hungry and wild. There was no need now to tell two careless little boys not to let May come to harm by getting into the stream. The dear old dog took care of her. Perhaps it was because little May loved him, and every one was kind to him, that the lean wild hound became the finest and most good-natured dog in the village, just as the Beast in the fairy tale changed into a prince when beauty loved him and broke the spell.

A Terrible Intruder.

BY MARIAN NORTHCOTT.

We were alone in the house—Maude Chaplin and I—and did not altogether like the position in which we were placed.

Whilst the daylight lasted, and there seemed so much life about the farm, it seemed very pleasant to have the house to ourselves, to be able to wander together through the quaint old rooms and to talk on subjects very dear to both of us, without the dread of being overheard by the London female cousins and the roystering youths who had come to spend a month of the shooting beneath our roof. For a time we revelled in our comparative solitude, and pitied the female cousins, the eager sportsmen, poor papa, and the rest of the household, who had been beguiled into accepting an invitation to Mrs. Rattletrap's picnic at the Scrubs, a piece of moorland some eight miles distant from our house. We were all expected, but my old school fellow Maude pleaded headache, and I was not sorry to have an excuse for staying at home with our guest. We had met but seldom since we left the prim school at Taunton; and although Maude had already been with us a week, what with the noisy chatter of our friends, the croquet tourneys, the lawn dances, and the other pleasant ways in which our evenings were spent, we had hitherto had no opportunity of indulging in those mutual confidences so dear to women who are in the blissful state known as "engaged." There was a particularly tender bond of sympathy betwixt us, inasmuch as I was in bi-weekly correspondence with her brother John, to whom I signed myself "yours affectionately," whilst her betrothed was Harry Somers, who had been a visitor to our house from his childhood. Ere they drove away in the afternoon the other girls twitted us rather severely for not joining them, and it seemed a general opinion that Maude's headache was nothing more than a sham. But the gentlemen said little; in my opinion their hearts would have been gladdened had all the party abstained from attending the picnic, their inclinations tending towards the wheat stubble in "Five-acre field" and the adjacent turnip patch, where a fine covey had sought shelter the night before. But as the girls were resolved upon going, the males of course were obliged to act as escort; by and by papa was induced to join them, and thus it was Maude and I were left alone.

So engrossing was the subject of our conversation that we were surprised when the housemaid brought in the tea, and dropping a curtsey, asked if Sarah, the cook, might, with her, go down to the village until ten o'clock to take in the festivities with which Farmer Ashcombe was celebrating his harvest home. It then occurred to my memory that the servants had asked me for this holiday a fortnight previously, and that I had given a half acquiescent response. In the hurry of my domestic duties, and the excitement occasioned by a house full of company, I had, however, forgotten the circumstance until now. "Where is Ben?" I inquired, referring to one of the carters who inhabited a snug little cottage on the farm, and was consequently required to place himself at our service when wanted.

The domestic dropped another curtsey, and announced that the individual alluded to had gone to Wells with a load of barley, and would not be back until late.

"And the boy Smith?"

"Please, 'm, master told him a might go when a 'ad fed the poultry and fastened 'em up for the night, and a 'as been gone this quarter of an hour."

"I hope he made sure the turkeys and geese were all right, for papa saw a fox cross the meadows this morning."

"Oh, yes, 'm, a is a careful lad is Smith, and he's got 'em all right 'enow, I'll be bound," responded the maid.

I hesitated a moment as to whether it was altogether safe to be thus left; but as I had given a half promise to the girls, and I knew it would be a sad disappointment to them not to go, I dismissed my apprehensions and told them they might leave the tea-things and be off at once.

Noticing that after a time Maude became less conversational, I inquired the reason; but receiving naught but evasive answers, I questioned her more closely. "You are not afraid, are you, dear?"

"I shall be only confessing the truth, when I tell you that I was very sorry to hear you give your consent to the servants leaving us. Suppose if any person has been watching the house, and was to seize the opportunity of committing a robbery?"

"My dear Maude," I responded, "nothing of the sort ever happens in these parts. Living, as we do, some distance from any town, we know all the persons resident within a radius of, say, four miles."

"But how about tramps? are they not dreadful people, sis?"

"Perhaps, Maude, even they are more sinned against than sinning. At all events, tramps seldom, if ever, come near us. You see we lie off the main road. The lane leads to the farm and nowhere else."

"But," persuaded Maude, "that fact would be all the worse for us if a tramp *should* come here."

"Really," I replied, "I shall get quite angry with you if you pursue the subject further. To put an end, however, to all your fears you shall come with me, and we will bolt the outer doors."

The alacrity with which Maude rose from her chair was good proof that the proposed measure was of a welcome nature, so, proceeding from the drawing-room, we walked to the lawn, and fastening the gate which opened on to the lane, reentered the house. We then locked, bolted, and barred the back premises, saw that all the windows were fastened, and then came back to the drawing-room.

I must confess that when we had secured all the approaches to our citadel, I was myself a good deal more at ease than I had been previously.

Slowly the autumn sun sank beneath the range of hills fronting our dwelling, tinging the sky with radiant hues which varied momentarily.

I could have sat for hours watching the numerous hues that swept across the heavens, but with the uprising moon and the gathering twilight I saw that Maude was once more becoming nervous.

"Won't you close the shutters?" inquired Maude.

"Not unless you particularly wish it, dear," I replied.

"But I do," she answered.

I was about to shut out the moonlight view, and make a desperate effort to change the conversation, when Maude, who had her eyes fixed upon the lawn, suddenly clutched my arm, and involuntarily retreated a step. "Sis," she cried, "what is that moving in the laurels?"

I looked, and in a moment observed emerging from the shelter of the laurels, but still remaining beneath the dense shadow of the overhanging tree, what seemed to be the figure of a man. He looked in height very short, almost dwarf-like, but was stout of frame, and appeared dressed in white, or was without a coat; what seemed to be his shirt sleeves being alone seen as he raised his arms when freeing himself from the bushes.

"O sis," exclaimed Maude, "it is a man. Let us give him all our jewelry, or mayhap we may be murdered ere any of our people come back."

"Maude," I cried, "for Heaven's sake, endeavor to retain your senses. You yesterday remarked the double-barrelled gun which hangs over the mantelpiece in the kitchen, and asked me if it were loaded! Do you think you could fetch it to me while I keep watch here?"

She nodded; I knew her fright prevented her speaking. Clasping her hand tightly within my own, and then releasing it, I said:

"Bring it to me, then; the gun is perfectly safe so long as you do not touch the trigger."

Whilst Maude was gone, it seemed to me as though the figure drew closer; it was careful to remain within the shadow of the tree, but it struck me as exceedingly strange that, although the white-sleeved arms were continually raised, as though their owner had but just awakened from a sound sleep, I could not see the creature's head.

In a very short time I heard Maude's approaching footsteps. As she placed the gun in my hand I felt that her fingers were cold and trembling.

At that moment the mysterious being drew a few paces nearer, he seemed to have a limping gait, whether from natural infirmity or drunkenness I could not tell.

Flinging open the window, and raising the gun, I cried at the top of my voice, "Who's there? Answer, or I fire!"

A few seconds elapsed, but no response came to my inquiry.

"Who are you?" I again shouted.

My fingers closed upon the trigger, then came a flash of light and a loud report—the intruder upon the lawn staggered and fell.

Simultaneously poor Maude sank fainting on the carpet.

Not daring to move from the room, I rested the gun against the table, and raising Maude's head in my hands, endeavored to restore her to consciousness. What seemed to me hours, but what really could not have been more than twenty minutes, passed, and then came the sound of vehicles driven rapidly up the lane. I heard my father clamoring for admittance, and hurrying to the door, fell almost swooning into his arms.

As coherently as I could, I told him of our adventure, and that the body of a man lay beneath the laurel bushes; so resigning me to the care of one of the gentlemen, he hurried to the spot indicated. In a moment after, his cheery voice sounded through the still air, "I've got him; but he's more frightened than hurt. Why, girls, it's a representative of yourselves! It's nothing *but a goose!*"

Neither was it. That boy Smith, who was so much to be depended on, had for once proved himself unworthy of his trust, and this poor bird, in its futile endeavors to seek its companions, had in our nervous fancy become magnified to the proportions of a housebreaking desperado, its outstretched wings in the shadow, to which it so persistently kept, helping to carry out the delusion we had entertained. Of course we were pretty considerably rallied about the matter, but we never after volunteered to remain in the house alone.

The Six Resolutions.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

The Rectory was the most comfortable house within the parish of Hipping Mead. The Rector, the Rev. Elam Martyn, was a widower with seven daughters, the eldest six-and-twenty, the youngest fourteen years old—he had been a widower some thirteen years.

Thus it happened that at the age of thirteen Gerty, his eldest daughter, took upon herself the ordering of the household, and had remained ever since, as her father said, prime minister—a born administrator she was, and her father knew it. Never, from household disorganization had the Rector been once tempted, these thirteen years of widowhood, to cast a thought on second wedlock, and the very possibility of such a thing had never entered his daughters' heads.

It was the first week in October, and Mr. Martyn went to Harrington, a neighboring parish, to indulge on a friend's acres in some unclerical sport, and to take a Sunday's duty.

As he was absent ten days, Gerty inaugurated a house cleaning—her usual escape for repressed energies. A week had elapsed since his departure, the actual cleansing process was over, but the things had not been replaced in their respective localities, orderly confusion reigned supreme—even confusion was orderly with Gerty.

The six sisters sat at the breakfast table. Amy, the youngest, and an invalid, was on the sofa, the meal was just over, and Gerty was opening the post-bag. Its only contents that morning was a letter from the Rector, addressed to "The Miss Martyns."

Rather surprised, Gerty, as the eldest, opened the letter. It was short; not half-a-dozen lines; she read it, and let it drop to the floor.

"Girls!" she cried, in a faint voice, "papa is married!"

For a second or two no one spoke; then Nelly, with a white face, picked up the letter and read it aloud. It was as follows:

"My Dear Daughters:—This morning I married a widow with six children. She is a good manager, but the children are very unruly. I hope to be home on Saturday night.

Your loving father,
Elam Martyn."

The consternation at the breakfast-table baffles description. A sob broke from Nelly; it was re-echoed at intervals by her six sisters. They looked at each other blankly; then round the large and cosy room, taking a prospective farewell. Over the sideboard hung a full-length portrait of the late Mrs. Martyn. Gerty's eyes led the way to its contemplation, the six other pairs followed. Gerty exclaimed:

"My poor mother!"

In different keys each voice repeated the lament.

"I shall at once go out as a lady-help," said Gerty, taking, as the eldest, the lead in declaring her intentions.

"And I," said Sophie, "I shall get Cousin Tom to take me into St. Luke's Hospital as nurse. Luckily for me, like Gerty, my family and the village have trained me well for my vocation."

"Such a nurse as you are!" they all cried. "Oh, it's a shame!"

Then Nelly, her father's favorite, wiping away her tears with angry gestures, cried:

"Papa used to call me little Mrs. Fry. I think he was just prophesying, for I'll apply to the Governor of St. Giles' Prison to be made a female warder. Bill Jones—Burly Bill, you know, has been often there, and he says the female warders are quite ladies, and live by themselves."

"Oh, Nelly!" they all exclaimed, "it is such an ugly dress. Your hair's all cut short, and you have to wear big keys at your side."

"I shall at any rate be useful," said Nelly lofily, "and not in *anybody's* way," and she relapsed into tears.

In a soft and deprecatory tone, Emma took up her burthen.

"It is a world full of pain," she sighed. "Whatever our special vocations may be, man's universal aim seems to be crushing woman's best affections. I shall go as companion to Miss Triniger; she has often asked me. Papa shall have a quiet fireside."

"Miss Triniger!" they all cried, horrified. "Oh, not Miss Triniger; she never sees a soul, and she is so crabbed, so selfish. Oh, not her, Emma."

"I am patient," said Emma, with the air of expectant martyrdom.

With a decidedly more cheerful voice, quavering between a smile and a tear, Mary, the tender-hearted governess, announced her intentions.

"I shall marry cousin Tom," she said. "I didn't like to be the first to break our happy circle, but he wanted me to marry him months ago, so I'll do it now."

"Oh, Mary!" they exclaimed, one after the other; "oh, Mary dear, we are so glad!"

And then they all wept together. In a little time they dried their eyes and looked at Gracey, who had made no sign of delivering her resolution.

"And you, Gracey," they said, "what will you do?"

"Sisters," she replied quietly, "I shall stay here."

"Here!" they echoed in different keys of astonishment.

"Yes," she repeated, "here. If papa will not need me, Amy will. You forgot Amy."

"Amy," said each, in a shamed whisper.

And then they all rose together—all but Gracey, and gave the invalid a pardon-asking kiss.

"Gracey is right," they said. "One of us must stay here and take care of poor Amy."

And they wished in their secret hearts that in their pride and anger, their wounded affections, their self-assertion and impulsive reprisals, they had not forgotten Amy.

Saturday night came, and round the tea-table the six sisters, Amy on the couch as before, awaited the arrival of their father.

The seat at the head of the table was empty, in ominous expectancy. Throughout the house a careless desolation reigned.

No one spoke. Each watched the clock furtively. Seven struck, and three minutes after the gravel was scattered against the windows, the bell was rung hastily, the door opened, and unmet, unwelcomed, but certainly not unexpected, Mr. Martyn returned to the bosom of his family. He was alone; his daughters rose simultaneously.

"Well!" he cried, his eyes twinkling mischievously, "what has happened, Nelly?" and he looked at his favorite. "Not one kiss for papa from any of you girls?"

And then he counted them; beginning at Gerty he called each by name, till, reaching Amy, he cried;

"And Amy's seven. You're all here. And what a state the house is in," looking quizzically round the room; "everything's topsy turvey; been frightened by ghosts?" he laughed. "Why, Peggy only half opened the door for me, and Dan never opened his lips from the station to the hall door."

"Papa," said Gerty, severely, "why didn't you bring her in?"

"Who in?" and the Rector's mouth twitched.

"The new mistress of Hipping Mead," replied Gerty.

"Your wife, sir," said Sophie.

"Poor mamma's successor," sobbed Nelly.

"The strange woman," cried Mary, reproachfully.

"Mrs. Martyn," said Emma, with convincing simplicity.

"The widow you married, sir," said Gracey.

"And the six children," piped poor, weak little Amy.

"Good gracious!" cried the Rector, divesting himself of his outer coat, "A woman with so many individualities knew I never."

Then all in concert demanded:

"Did you not write and tell us you had married a widow with six children?"

"Yes," replied the Rector, laughing heartily; "yes, and so I did, but to another man."

The only one of the resolutions kept was Mary's. She did marry cousin Tom, but she always declared she had been frightened into it.

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THE POET'S AWAKENING.

Long had he been a thing of common clay,
A being of earthly mould;
But, lo! an angel crossed his path one day,
And turned the clay to gold.

Silent was he: the angel came again,
And, as she passed along,
She kissed his lips all lovingly, and then
He opened them in song.

MABEL'S VICTORY;

—OR—

The Cost of a Will.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEMESIS," "GLORY WINS," ETC.

CHAPTER IX—[CONTINUED.]

The terms had been settled with Mr. Montagu, and were liberal enough, and he had written to Mabel. Only he himself could tell what it cost him to do that. It seemed the deathblow to all that was bright in his life—the burial of all his hopes.

He made his letter as brief as he could, for it was full of sorrow. He told her how he had been master at Whiteladies for one little week, and then how, without warning, he had been suddenly deprived of everything. He did not tell her he was staying on in the old house in the hope of finding some clue to the secret of his aunt's strange will. He would not raise hopes that might be blighted—which would be, he said to himself in the bitter despondency of the moment.

He told her that he would not seek to bind her to any promise of the past. He had nothing but himself to offer her, and he would be faithful to her to his life's end. If she cared to write to him again or to send a word to cheer him on his lonely way, she was to write under cover to Mr. Montagu, who would always have his address.

Mabel got this letter in her far-away Indian home—her father happened to be out when the mail delivery was made—and wept her heart out over it in loving pity. Arthur's poverty should make no difference to her, and she answered the dismal tidings with as cheerful a missive as she could pen, bidding him have hope and patience, and to believe above all things that she was true—that nothing should shake her faith in him—and that while she lived her heart would not hold to any other image, whether he had any money or not.

A blessed gleam of sunshine amid the clouds would this letter have been to Arthur Dallas if he had ever received it; but the time passed on and he received no word from Mabel Leslie, and he began to think her love had not stood the test of adversity.

He knew better in the days that were still to come; but the thought was very bitter to him now.

Mabel placed her missive in the hands of a servant who was her special outdoor attendant—a grave, handsome man, with a flowing beard and spotless white raiment—who declared himself the slave of the pretty mem sahib in all things. He was so quick, so patient, and so attentive that she had no fear of trusting Ali in all things.

"You will go straight into the town with it, Ali," she said.

"Yes, mem sahib!"

"And put it into the post. Don't let anyone touch it. It is most important!"

Ali showed his white teeth and looked the very picture of copper-colored trustworthiness.

"No one shall touch missie's note," he said. "Ali will take care of it."

"You will cause me great sorrow, Ali, if you don't, and you wouldn't like that!"

Ali bowed his turbaned head and salaamed and protested. He prayed that the graves of his grandfathers might be defiled and his household cursed for ever and ever if he did not do her bidding.

Mabel watched him till he was out of sight of the bungalow on his way to the town, and heaved a sigh of relief. Her letter was safe, and Arthur would know that she was true.

Presently Ali came back and she questioned him.

Oh, yes, her letter was safe. He had put it into the post office—right down into its throat—himself. No one had touched it, and the mail went out in the morning, so that it would be in England in a month.

His young mistress thanked him and gave him a rupee, and he professed the utmost gratitude, but Mabel did not know her Indian servants yet.

The gentle-eyed Ali—whose curling beard was alone enough to inspire confidence—went straight to the Colonel and put the letter in his hand.

"Mem sahib gave me a rupee to post it," he said.

"Well, here's another for bringing it to me," the Colonel said, tossing him the coin; "and bring me every one sent to the same address—mind that!"

Ali promised, and Mabel wondered as the days went on why she heard no more of Arthur, and fretted and grew pale till at length her father suddenly announced his intention of going home again.

Plenty of his friends had predicted that he would never keep his appointment, and sundry malpractices therein led to his receiving an intimation that he had better find another sphere for his transcendant abilities.

It was not exactly a dismissal, and Mabel never knew the true reason. Colonel Leslie was allowed to make his health the plea for his return, and to hide his rage and chagrin under a mask of pretended illness.

He knew all about the succession of Bellairs to the Whiteladies property, and the conditions attached to it, and he resolved to make Kingcoim the scene of his future operations.

There was good society there in the season, and he had not as yet made the place too hot to hold him.

He might be of great help to a man like James Bellairs with his knowledge of the world and his insight into the ways of the upper ten thousand.

But for that cold clause in the will of the late Mrs. Dallas, and the injunctions laid upon her heir to keep single, he would have laid siege to Whiteladies and its owner for Mabel.

It did not matter to him that the man was middle aged, vulgar and ignorant. He would have given his daughter to a Caliban, so the monster had a fortune.

Arthur Dallas had little notion that he should see Mabel again so soon, nor had the Colonel any idea that his daughter's lover was still in the neighborhood of his old home.

He thought, as she did, that he had gone away somewhere to seek a living, and never dreamed that returning to England would bring her face to face with him once more.

Things settled themselves down a little at Whiteladies in a few days, and by the time the first snow lay like a crown of purity on the old church that covered the vault where Mrs. Dallas lay, the neighbors had forgot their amazement and began to call on "James Bellairs, Esq.," as he was described on the roll of householders in the parish.

He acquitted himself much better than might have been expected in his new position.

Arthur Dallas had done all he could to refine and brighten him, and he could receive his visitors and sustain his part in a conversation very creditably.

Nothing had come to light to confirm the suspicions they had felt about the letter, but a nervousness in Bellairs' manner and a restlessness they noticed in him always suggested he had something to hide. It might be that he was worried and vexed with himself about Mrs. Pincher, whose hopes were blighted and whose departure from Whiteladies had been curiously sudden.

"What are you going to do with Mrs. Pincher?" Arthur asked him, when the matter of his staying in the house was settled. "Poor soul! I hear she is grieved dreadfully. You will not marry her now?"

"I will not, sir."

There was a curious expression in his face as he spoke, that his new secretary tried hard to comprehend, but failed.

"I shall provide for her, of course, but not here."

"Well, no. That would hardly do. Everybody knows of your long engagement, and you could not keep the woman here and not marry her."

"And I shouldn't be here myself if I did," Bellairs said. "It's all right, Mr. Dallas. Mrs. Pincher knows that I mean her well, and she knows, too, that the sooner she is out of Whiteladies the better."

One of the first things that Arthur Dallas did for his new employer was to escort Mrs. Pincher to the nearest railway station.

She was very tearful, but said not a word of blame against the new master's conduct to her.

"He knows best, sir," she said. "He won't let me want, I know, but I shall be the ruin of him yet."

"Bless me! How?" Arthur asked, aghast at this astounding declaration. "You can only be the ruin of him by marrying him, and he is selfish enough to prefer Whiteladies to you."

"I know, sir—I know. It's very natural, of course—and I know I shall never marry him," sobbed poor Pincher. "Please don't mind anything I say, sir. I hardly know what I'm talking about. I'm a bit dazed, I think."

CHAPTER X.

A GHOST AT WHITELADIES.

No one knew what had become of Mrs. Pincher, and in the present state of Mr. Bellairs' money matters it was perfectly certain that he could not do much for her beyond allowing her enough to live upon.

The more Mr. Montagu pondered over the queer will which had given Whiteladies to Mrs. Dallas's old servant, the more he felt sure that there was something in the background.

He got a copy of the document for Arthur, and the two went over it together carefully but could find no clue. The directions were clear. Nothing was to be touched for six months from the date of the funeral, showing clearly that the testatrix expected something to happen within that time.

That something was doubtless the marriage of Bellairs and Mrs. Pincher, which would make the will null and void; but Bellairs had openly declared that he would not marry his old love, and showed no intention of such an act.

Queer reports began to get about a few weeks after Mrs. Dallas's death.

One or two servants left rather suddenly, declaring that the house was haunted, and that the spirit of their old mistress could not rest, but might be seen at uncanny hours flitting about the rooms she used to occupy, as though looking for something.

Mr. Bellairs heard the reports and was manifestly uneasy.

"I'm not afraid of ghosts," he said. "I never saw one to my knowledge, but it gives a place a bad name. Do you think there's any truth in it, Mr. Dallas? Not that I should be afraid of her, poor dear, if I did see her, but it makes a person shiver to think of it!"

It occurred to Arthur that he was very much afraid for some reason or other, but he only laughed, and said that ghosts were impossible, and that he was quite sure his aunt had nothing to come back about.

"No, of course not!" said Bellairs, wiping his face. "It may be a trick or a joke, though it's a bad one to my mind and might do a lot of mischief."

"I will try and solve the mystery for you," Arthur Dallas said, gravely. "I will find out where this ghost has been seen, and watch. If it is a practical joke it can't be kept up for ever!"

He made his inquiries carefully, and found there really was a scare in the house on the subject.

Something—no one seemed to know what—had been seen in the dead of night in the rooms formerly occupied by Mrs. Dallas and the passage adjoining.

For several nights the young man watched till daybreak without result, the house being as still and silent as the grave, except in the master's bedroom, where there was no rest for James Bellairs. He was sick with a terror he dared not show, and could not sleep.

In spite of his protestations he believed in ghosts, and regarded the possible return to earth of his late mistress with an awful horror.

"What shall I do? What shall I do?" he groaned to himself in the solitude of his handsome room, every shadow in which seemed to hold a spirit. "If she should come back what can I do? I should go mad!"

The watching resulted in nothing, and after some time the queer report died away, and not much was said about the ghost, though the belief lingered, and the servants took care to avoid the room the apparition had visited after nightfall. Mr. Dallas told his old friend, Mr. Montagu, of the gossip and of Bellairs' perturbation.

"His conscience isn't easy," that gentleman replied. "Wait and watch. Whatever it is will come out some day."

"But the time is passing so quickly," said Arthur, "and at the end of six months he can sell the old place and realize all the rest of the property, and go to the other side of the world if he likes. Before the roses bloom again in my poor aunt's garden, Whiteladies and all in it will have passed to strangers. I know he means to sell the minute he has the power. He has given Grigg instructions."

"*Nil desperandum!*" said Mr. Montagu, cheerily, laying his hand on his young friend's shoulder. "If I had the cant of a religious professor on the end of my tongue, I should say that the Almighty would not permit such injustice and so forth, and bolster you up with Bible texts about faith and resignation to the Divine Will. I hav'n't that jargon ready to my tongue, boy; but I humbly believe in the mercy and justice of heaven, and I feel sure that the monstrous fraud by which this man holds your place will be discovered yet, for it is a fraud in some way, I am certain."

It was hard work for Arthur to keep his spirits up at all, as the winter drew on and Christmas came round.

The last Church's festival he had been his aunt's almoner, and brought good cheer and brightness into many a poor house.

This time there was no bounty to bestow, for the new master of Whiteladies found himself cruelly straightened, the provision made for his six months' probation being only just enough to live upon and no more.

He could only raise money on his expectations, at an exorbitant rate of interest—a general impression seeming to prevail that there was more meant by the bequest to him than met the eye.

He managed, in the midst of his worry, to find what seemed an exorbitant sum for Mrs. Pincher.

Arthur Dallas one day chanced upon a receipt of hers for one hundred pounds, which had been put into an open part of his desk by mistake.

"Pincher can bleed him, that's evident," he said to himself. "Why, I wonder? Poor devil! It isn't all roses to him, though he is rich!"

His own troubles and anxiety about Mabel outweighed everything else after a time, and he grew pale and listless like a man who has no hope left in the world. He told Mr. Montagu how he had written, and begged for a line in reply, if she was still true to him; and how he had waited and hoped, till hope had died within him, and none had come.

"There's no truth in all the world," he said, bitterly. "I could have staked my life on Mabel's good faith—I so thoroughly believed in her love."

"And you don't now?"

"I'm torn with doubts, Montagu. I wrote to tell her that I was a beggar—that I had nothing but what I could earn, and she is afraid to look the world in the face by my side. It is not to be wondered at, perhaps; but it is hard to bear."

"It would not be wonderful if Mabel Leslie were an ordinary girl," the lawyer replied. "But she isn't. Any girl who could keep herself pure and honest, and the lady she is, through the life she has had with that reprobate of a father of hers, is worth better things at your hands than to have her faith doubted at the first *contretemps* like this."

"But her silence. Surely, she could have written."

"How do you know she ever saw your letter? Colonel Leslie may have intercepted it; he, doubtless, knows all about your misfortune, and the dear old gentleman is capable of anything."

"If I could only hope it was so—if I could only think my Mabel was still true."

"You'd put off that woebegone countenance, and behave like a rational being. I wish I'd a heavy wager on it. Whatever her father may be, that girl's 'thorough,' Arthur; and you'll find it out some day."

His words gave Arthur Dallas new life and hope for a little while, but still no letter came; and poor Mabel, far away across the sea, was beginning to think that her loving words had found no echo in Arthur's heart, and to grow paler than ever, and more like a crushed flower, pining for a reply to the letter she had entrusted to the treacherous Ali to post.

Christmas passed and the new year, and late in January Mr. Montagu sent for Mr. Dallas.

He rarely went to Whiteladies, though Bellairs was always obsequiously civil to him.

He fancied the young man's self-imposed task would be easier if he only helped him with advice, and that maybe suspicions would be roused if he were seen too often at the house.

"News for you," he said, as Arthur entered his room. "A solution of the mystery of Miss Leslie's silence, maybe!"

"News of her! Of Mabel!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

Fashion Notes, Queries and Fireside Chat.

We can generally trace any decided change in fashion to the influence of some very prominent event. We are indebted to the battle of Steinkerque for the invention of the necktie, or "Cravate a la Steinkerque." The French Revolution, while demolishing social prejudices, banished also, for the time, paniers and powder.

I might add to this list many other revolutions in fashion in the past, which have been the result of a revolution in events, but the present time offers an illustration equally as forcible, for to the present French Exposition we can trace the gradual encroaching influence of the change which we find now permanently established in popular favor.

For two or three years the fashion has been entirely in favor of very tight dresses with very long trains. It is not necessary to discuss the merits or disadvantages of this style, for each side of the argument has its warm partisans; but it must be conceded by both, that the very narrow "fourreau" dresses have had their day.

In its place there are various predictions to be reported, and among them is one which partakes of the farthingale of the sixteenth century, the panier of the Louis XV. period, with the crinolines and puffings of a more recent date. With such a combination we can expect a costume of an entirely novel character, to which a special name will probably be given.

As the season advances these predictions will assume a tangible realization.

The favorite style at present is the "Watteau," with its short, puffed paniers; the corsage is worn with a belt, and is separated from the skirt, which is gracefully rounded on the hips or sides to form paniers.

It is also said that the style of arranging the hair will follow in this retrograde movement, and instead of the fringe falling on forehead, the hair will be raised in front "a la Marie Antoinette."

With this fragmetary information on the coming changes, let us revert to the discussion of new materials, which always should precede that of the styles or forms in which they are made.

Our merchants are rapidly preparing for the Fall campaign of Dame Fashion, and are marshalling their forces together until they have legions of Fall and Winter novelties for us to inspect.

Foremost among these preparations are those of Mr. Wanamaker, who, on the firm foundation of his past success, has established a popularity which will never wane; for one hears constantly, among the throng who every day fill the various departments of the Grand Depot, "What would we do without the Grand Depot?" "What a convenient place to do our shopping!" While another one says, "There is so much to be seen here, I want to come every day!"

To all these attractions and conveniences for shopping, he has added a millinery department, complete in every detail of not only exquisite imported bonnets, but untrimmed bonnets with all the variety of trimmings requisite for them, so one can purchase an outfit there which will comprise everything from head to foot, and all under one roof! I cannot omit adding, What an achievement for our benefit!

The woollen materials are charming this Autumn, the combination of colors effective and rich—the warm, rich tints of red being particularly so. India cashmere, India, mousseline delaine, Scotch cashmere in small irregular checks, and silk and wool brocbes in small Persian designs are among the variety to be seen.

As I have previously stated, the materials seem to be made expressly with a view to making combination-costumes for the figured fabrics combine colors harmonizing perfectly with those of plain tints.

Although I have taken only a glimpse of some of the goods already exhibited by Mr. Wanamaker, I have gleaned a few interesting items for my readers.

The India cashmeres, which are in all the dark shades of navy blue, brown, green, olive, bronze, and prune, will be charmingly combined with broche of the same tint. The cashmeres are 48 inches wide, and $1 a yard. The broches show combinations of navy blue, olive, and old gold; bronze, with navy blue and old gold; brown, with the the design in threads of silvery white. They are in small irregular patterns, or in a large floriated design, and will be generally used for the trimming on plain materials, forming the vest, revers on the drapery, cuffs, collar, and bias bands, where they are used; for instance, a navy blue, which is of the darkest shade of that color, has a vest of blue and old gold broche, which is used to form the facing of the laveuse tunic, and cuffs and collar, and revers on the tails of the coat of plain blue; a narrow bias band may also be used as a heading for the one pleating of plain blue on the skirt.

These broches will be used as overdresses with velvet skirts, and will also combine with the other materials of solid colors, among which are those on which the surface threads are in tiny loops, which I formerly alluded to as resembling the surface of Brussels carpet. These are 24 inches wide, and 30 cents a yard. The broches are 24 inches wide, and $2 a yard.

I must add to their list those having a tiny design of flowers and leaves on a solid ground of maroon, blue, and other colors, as being especially adapted for the vests which are so popular.

The coatings have dark ground fine diagonal, on which twisted threads of blue, old gold, and red form faint irregular checks. These are 48 inches, and $1.75 per yard. They are imitated in the cheaper textures of 24 inches, at 50 cents, and 48 inches, at $1.

Another very effective wool material has a black ground, on which are closely woven silk threads of red, pale blue, and gold. Another was pale blue, with closely woven threads of pale blue silk. These are 24 inches, and 75 cents a yard.

I also noticed a black material resembling the raised armures, the black ground forming a raised, zigzag design, and crossed by silk threads of some bright tint—pale blue or garnet. These are 48 inches, $2.25 a yard.

The Scotch plaids are lovely and soft in texture, and not at all conspicuous in colors; the toning down effect of the plain material, which will be combined in such costumes, will make them very useful and popular.

For ball costumes there is a variety of soft delicate-tinted materials, and an exquisite trimmings. For these fabrics Mr. Wanamaker has a most tempting variety of embroidery on crepe lisse and gauze de Chambery, which is thicker and firmer than crepe lisse.

He shows these in black and white, and in narrow and wide widths; the prices being from 50 cents up to $1.10 a yard.

The embroidery is exquisitely done either in pale shades of blue, rose, pink, white, or mauve, or lovely combinations of these colors. Besides being used for dress trimmings, they make the most effective trimming for caps, fichus, jabots, etc.

For neck wear there are black beaded lace collarettes, with black or colored jet or gilt beads. These are made with a thick ruche on the neck and a jabot, and are from $1.25 up to $3.

Added to these is a lovely assortment of three-cornered pieces of white India muslin, trimmed with lace. The new varieties of Torchon lace are exquisite, resembling the Maltese, or Cluny, in pattern. Besides the variety of excellent imitations of thread, Malines and point are wonderfully good and very much used for these popular neck-scarfs.

The new ribbons are as attractive as the dress goods. The heavy toned satin ribbons are in all the popular combinations. But more attractive than these are the broche ribbons in delicate-tinted grounds, with a vine of wild flowers, or roses and leaves, through the centre. The three-inch width is 75 cents a yard. Then there is the very narrow one inch width for 25 cents a yard, in pale blue, pink, or white satin grounds, with a tiny vine of small daisies, forget-me-nots, and buds through the centre, being especially adapted for bows for evening dresses of white muslin, and for trimming the little morning caps so much worn.

The subject of bonnets and bonnet trimmings is so prolific about this time that it would take several columns to tell the story. But a short description of what is to be found in Mr. Wanamaker's new department I am sure will be interesting.

First, let me speak of the materials for bonnets as well as trimmings. These are in a variety of ribbet velvets and plush, which are to be used for trimming as well as for the entire bonnet, the light shades of pink, blue and white being made for evening bonnets, or used as scarfs for white felt and beaver.

They are also in dark combinations, such as gold and maroon, or gold and black, garnet and black, olive and pale blue; the prices varying from 63 up to $6 a yard. A quarter to three-eighths making a full scarf for a bonnet.

The fancy ornaments for bonnets are endless in variety, and are prominent in the trimming of all the hats and bonnets. Garnet beads and carbuncles combined with gilt forming a cluster of leaves and buds; but the small serpent and lizard are the features of almost all. The former are coiling on a bar of gilt or steel, or on the stem of a gilt leaf studded with steel; or the two together are coiled on a horizontal bar, with a garnet ring in the centre.

Bronze lizards are with tail and legs spread out or half coiled, some having the body thickly studded with tiny garnets.

Bronze beetles are pierced with a tiny gilt pin with a garnet ball head; and gilt butterflies have their wings studded with garnet beads.

To these I may add other styles with a collection of gilt balls connected by gilt or silver chains. Bronze and gilt pointed scales, a succession of them in layers. The prices vary as much as the pins, and beginning at 15 cents, increase to 28, 44, 50, 88 and 80 cents up to $1.50.

Bonnets will be of the two extremes in size—either very large or extremely small. The "Cabriolet," with its large, square crown and flaring brim, or the Bebe and Capote shapes fitting close to the head in front, with a high crown. Others have the square crown like the former, and the brim bent and turned up or down here and there, and a half wreath of flowers on the inside of the side turned up.

But the Cabriolet and Capote have no face trimming, the fronts being faced with the bonnet material and the edge finished off with a gilt cord or left plain.

Flowers, with chenille and leaves, and gilt fringe, or grasses, ostrich feathers, birds, and bird breasts, with some fancy gilt ornament, are among the trimmings; while black thread lace is seen on many, generally forming a full cascade on the back and holding in its folds the cluster of flowers.

Another shape which has had great popularity abroad all Summer is called the "Beef eater." It has a square crown and rolling brim turned up and faced with satin or velvet, and feathers complete the trimming.

Our Fireside Chat.

Recipes for Tomatoes.—1. Stuffed.—Take as many tomatoes as there will be people to eat them; cut a circle off the top of each, and with a small spoon remove all the pips, which put on one side; then make a stuffing of shallots, mushrooms, and bread crumbs, in the proportion of ten shallots and half a pound of mushrooms for every ten tomatoes. Mince the shallots, separately, very small, and toss them in a saucepan with some butter. When cooked add the mushrooms, also cut to make a good, thick paste. Squeeze the tomato pips, and with the juice moisten the stuffing, after which divide the latter into as many portions as there are tomatoes. Inserting one into the hollow of each tomato; then re-cover the vegetables with the circles cut off the top; place them in a dish large enough to contain all, near one another, pour over them two tablespoonfuls of olive oil, bake in the oven for half an hour and serve.

2. Dip the tomatoes in hot water, and peel them; cut them in half and remove the pips. Rub a baking tin with garlic, butter it, lay the tomatoes in it side by side, and fill each half with the following composition: Two parts bread crumbs, one part mushroom finely minced, a little parsley chopped fine, pepper and salt to taste. Put a small piece of butter on each, bake for ten or fifteen minutes, and serve each tomato on a round slice of bread tried in butter.

3. Prepare the tomatoes as above, arrange them in a dish that will stand the fire, besides filling them with the composition strew a layer of baked bread crumbs over all. Bake and serve in the dish.

4. Cut half a dozen tomatoes in halves, remove the pips and fill the inside with a mixture of bread crumbs, pepper, and salt in due proportions; place a small piece of butter on each half tomato, and lay them close together in a well buttered tin. Bake in a slow oven about half an hour, and serve. They may be eaten hot or cold. A small quantity of grated Parmesan may be added to the bread crumbs.

5. (*A l'Italienne.*)—Prepare the tomatoes as above, put a little olive oil in a baking tin, arrange the tomatoes in it, and cover them all over with the following mixture: Two parts bread crumbs, one part ham finely minced, and, according to taste, some garlic, parsley, basil, thyme and marjoram; chopped small, pepper and salt. Pour some olive oil over all and bake.

6. Soak a tablespoonful of tapioca in water for a couple of hours, set it to boil, adding a little more water till quite done to the consistency of porridge. Add pepper, salt, and a little fresh butter. Cut two tomatoes in half, remove pips and watery substance, sprinkle with a little pepper and salt. Fill each half tomato with the tapioca, sprinkle the top with grated Parmesan and baked bread crumbs, put them into the oven for twenty minutes, and serve.

7. Fill the tomatoes, prepared as above, with some boiled rice; put a piece of butter on each, pepper and salt, and bake. Parmesan cheese may be added.

8. Fill the tomatoes with sausage meat, or with very finely minced cold meat, well seasoned, bound with the yolk of an egg and a squeeze of lemon. Strew a few baked bread crumbs over and bake.

1. Stewed.—Let the tomatoes not be overripe, cut them in half, remove the pips, and lay them flat in a saucepan, with either oil or butter, pepper, salt, finely minced parsley, and shallot. Let them cook very slowly, and serve as soon as done on slices of toast. Grated Parmesan cheese may be added during the process of cooking.

2. Cut four ripe tomatoes into quarters, and remove the pips and watery substance; cut an onion into the thinnest possible slices, put these into a saucepan with a large piece of butter, and keep shaking the saucepan on the fire until the slices of onions are cooked, but not browned; then add the quarters of tomatoes, with pepper and salt to taste, and toss the whole on the fire until the tomatoes are cooked, which will be in about ten minutes. Serve as a garnish to cutlets, or alone with bread sippets.

1. Salad.—Cut in quarters some unripe tomatoes (just beginning to turn red), remove pips, put them into a salad bowl well rubbed with garlic, add a little finely minced marjoram and basil, pepper, salt, and oil and vinegar in proportions according to the taste.

2. Ripe tomatoes sliced, and raw Spanish onion finely sliced, dressed with pepper, salt, oil, and vinegar, and a sprinkling of finely minced parsley.

3. Peel some good-sized tomatoes, not overripe, cut them in slices and remove the pips, lay them in a dish with oil and vinegar, in the proportion of two to one, sprinkle pepper and salt over them according to taste, a few leaves of basil finely minced, and some onions very finely sliced. They should lie in the sauce for a couple of hours before serving.

4. Omit the onion in the last two.

Tomato Catsup.—The season of tomato catsup is at hand, and housekeepers are busy preparing it; but among the many recipes which are being used there are but few good ones, although they all have their advocates, who think their own special recipe the best of all. I give you one which I think will prove a successful rival of all others, as it has a famous reputation among those who have used the recipe:

One bushel of large ripe tomatoes, one pint and a half of salt, one dozen large red peppers; boil together until the tomatoes are reduced to a pulp, when rub through a hair sieve, so that all is extracted but the skins and seeds. To this liquid add one paper of black pepper, one paper of ground allspice (or an amount of allspice equal to the paper of pepper), one tablespoonful of ground mace, one pint of English mustard seed, one pint of the smallest size white onions, which are chopped until reduced to a pulp. Boil all these ingredients with the tomato liquid one hour, constantly stirring. When finished add two quarts of vinegar, then bottle and seal with wax.

If these directions are carefully carried out, the result will be the finest and most delicious tomato catsup ever made. For cold meats it has no equal, and I hope that some of my readers will make use of it and compare it with others they have used, but do not omit any portion of the ingredients nor the directions on boiling.

Corn Oysters.—One pint of grated corn, one cup of flour, one egg, three tablespoonfuls of milk, one tablespoonful of melted butter, pepper and salt to taste; fried in small pieces in butter.

Corn Soup.—Twelve ears of corn boiled in six quarts of water; when done, cut it from the cobs; take the water in which it was boiled and put in a knuckle of veal, pepper and salt, boil and strain it, then add the corn, with one-quarter pound of butter, and four tablespoonfuls of flour blended together; boil all about one-quarter hour, and serve.

THE MEGAPHONE.—One of Edison's recent inventions is an apparatus which he calls the megaphone (great sound.) Three funnels are set upon a stand. The one in the centre is simply a huge speaking trumpet, and those disposed on each side of it are cones 6 feet 2 inches long and 27 inches in diameter at the base. To the apex of each cone one end of a flexible tube is attached, so the other end of each tube can be brought to the ear of the person using the arrangement. The apexes of the cones and the mouth of the trumpet are toward the operator, and the bases of the three funnels are directed to the place where the sound is to be sent, or from which sound is desired. With two of these megaphones, it is said, a conversation can be conducted through a distance of two miles.

When a cunning man seems the most humble and submissive, he is often the most dangerous. Look out always for the crouching tiger.

ANSWERS TO INQUIRERS

LILLIE WHITE, (Yakima, Wash.,)—There is no receipt to make the eyebrows grow.

MAGGIE, (Belmont, O.)—The lady rides on horseback on the gentleman's right hand side.

H. H. B., (Luzerne, Pa.,)—No charge whatever is made for answering correspondents either here or by post.

READER, (Manayunk, Pa.,)—Don Quixote has been translated into English frequently. Jarvis's is the most popular.

S. D., (Scott, Iowa.)—You ought most decidedly to take proceedings against the person who propagated so scandalous a report.

MAY, (Franklin, O.,)—It is a fiction that a great advantage or gain can be acquired by means of a million of old postage stamps.

CALDWELL, (Lewis, N. Y.,)—Turkish baths do not agree with all persons; it is advisable to consult a medical man before taking one.

A. M. S., (Cooper, Mo.,)—A lady could not recover damage for breach of promise of marriage made by a young man when under age.

ESMER, (Carbon, Pa.,)—Wait patiently; if the gentleman cares for you more than as a friend, he will soon find an opportunity of letting you know it.

JULIA, (Mercer, Pa.,)—The freehold property mean the lands and the houses upon them; all the other property is included in the term "personal."

POLLY, (Petra Mills, N. C.,)—If the gentleman broke off the engagement, and also without just cause, you should of course pass him by unnoticed.

THEATRE, (Philadelphia, Pa.,)—Lord Byron did write some dramas, but we imagine you refer to Mr. Byron, the English dramatic author of the present day.

ARTHUR, (Sarpy, Nebr.,)—You deserve great commendation for your perseverance; at the same time, your language respecting yourself is rather high-flown.

MELANCHOLY, (Linn, Oreg.,)—Redness of the nose and flushing of the face after meals arise from defective powers of digestion, or perhaps from eating too quickly.

C. B. R., (Kendall, Ill.)—It is impossible to lay down the rule of oratory in a few lines. You should practice by joining a debating society or take lessons of an elocutionist.

HENRIQUEZ, (Phila., Pa.,)—The word "choir" is pronounced quire. Apply cold cream to your face before using the lather-brush, so as to render the operation of shaving more easy.

A. M. C., (Van Buren, Iowa.)—The legal gentleman evidently seeks an opportunity for making himself known to you. A mere shadow of encouragement will induce him to express his wishes.

EDITH, (Sullivan, N. H.,)—The name Ellen (or Helen) is of Greek origin, and means "alluring," "dangerous" and "destroyer." A lady's handwriting should not be round, but rather pointed.

C. Y., (Merced, Cal.,)—If a man marries in a false name, and the wife is ignorant of it at the time, the marriage is a good one. Therefore, neither can marry again without having previously obtained a divorce.

OLD SHOES, (Hampshire, W. Va.,)—It is impossible to learn French thoroughly without residing for some time in France; a person of moderate ability might learn it grammatically in two years with a good tutor.

E. K. G., (Claiborne, Tenn.,)—At your age it is quite impossible to straighten bowed legs by any means whatever; instruments of any kind will only produce torture without any real alteration of the shape of the leg.

A. S., (Harrisburg, Pa.)—Submit the manuscript to some publisher who buses works of the same description; but judging from the specimen you have sent us, we do not think you have much chance for a favorable answer.

PINE, (Linn, Oreg.,)—The name Oregon—according to some, is from the Indian "Oregon," "River of the West." Others consider it derived from the Spanish "oreganon," wild marjoram, which grow on the Pacific coast.

WARREN W., (Izard, Ark.,)—"Jingo" is a Basque word for "God," and is used by profane Basque sailors in their nautical imprecations. Hence, those who say "by Jingo" are merely swearing under the cover of a foreign language.

OLIVE, (Gloucester, N. J.,)—"Deceitfulness" is not dependent on the color of the skin; nor is there any truth in the assumption that it is most commonly found, either, in the case of light or dark persons. Both notions prevail, and commonly have their origin in some local tradition.

INQUISITIVE, (Calloway, Ky.,)—The custom of clinking glasses when about to drink, or what is termed "hob-nobbing," is an old custom, signifying extreme good fellowship, from which we have little doubt the modern quiet manner of "taking wine" with a selected guest is derived. We cannot tell you where it originated.

H. L., (Pickens, Ala.,)—If you mean separated by a legal divorce, that is, the marriage entirely dissolved, a second marriage is perfectly legal. As to the question of the children, that depends upon the decision of the judge. If he orders them to be under the care of the mother, the father will have to pay the cost of their maintenance and education.

I. Y. L., (Shenandoah, Pa.,)—The Welsh bards formed an hereditary order, regulated by laws enacted as early as 940 and 1078 A. D. When the principality of Wales was added to the British crown, in 1284, Edward I. suppressed them, because of their too great influence with the people. The institution of the bards was revived by the Tudor sovereigns; and since then, "Eisteddfodds" (meetings) of the order have been frequently held.

J. WALKER, (Macomb, Ill.,)—You must study harmony diligently if you wish to be a musician. You cannot write a good melody without its knowledge. A good melody is always founded on a correct and natural harmony; where such harmony is not to be met with, or not to be readily perceived, it is impossible that the melody should prevent the requisite flow and smoothness, even if its individual steps were in themselves correct and agreeable to the ear.

FANNY, (Phila., Pa.,)—There can be no solid and enduring affection, such as alone can give happiness in the married state, without mutual respect; and the behavior of the young man, as described, certainly seems to show that he has no more respect in his heart than is felt towards him. Clearly there can be no real hope or prospect of felicity under the conditions portrayed. It is of no use to ignore matters; such feelings must produce misery and life-long regrets.

BANDA, (Genesee, Mich.,)—Your case is a strange one. With regard to the matter on which you require advice, we think the best plan to bring the gentleman's intention to a test, is to invite him to your residence when your mother only is at home, and then leave the management of the affair to her tact. She will soon discover what his real desires are towards you. This counsel may seem rather out of the ordinary course, but this is a fast age, and the old-fashioned rules of etiquette in love matters are now almost entirely set aside.

NANCY, (Prince George, Va.,)—Your department is indeed strange, and anything but well-bred; still your sisters are really to blame. You are suffering from excess of self-consciousness, and this through being thrown so much on your own resources. A cheerful, high-spirited companion, even if not of equal social status with yourself, would prove most helpful until such time as you mix more in society, or womankind gives you more "ballast." Swift tells us that "a pleasant companion is as good as a coach;" and we believe him. Try the recipe.

AMANDON, (Phila., Pa.,)—Your selection was a good one. The Romans were fond of roses. Cleopatra received Antony at one of her banquets in an apartment covered with rose leaves to a considerable depth; and Antony himself, when dying, begged to have rose leaves scattered on his tomb. The Roman generals who had achieved any remarkable victory were permitted to have roses sculptured on their shields. Rose-water was the favorite perfume of the Roman ladies, and the most luxurious even used it in their baths. In the East the rose has always been a favorite with the poets. The Turks believe that roses sprang from the perspiration of Mahomet; for which reason they never throw them upon a rose leaf, or suffer one to lie on the ground; they also sculpture a rose on the tombstones of females who die unmarried.

HOPE, (South Saginaw, Mich.,)—Yours is a case in point, illustrating our position most completely. Taking the very grave and exaggerated view presented, you have perpetuated the cause of jealousy by the attention bestowed on it. Cause to think of it. Give the subject a task before it is left waiting at the very gate for admittance. A good way to secure sound and refreshing sleep is to take a hand shower-bath, made with a sponge, before trying to go to sleep; also avoid the popular fallacy that the feet should be kept warm by artificial means either by night or day. The aim should be to promote free circulation of blood in the extremities. Pressure of any kind diminishes the quantity of fluid in the vessels, and, if this is maintained, the vessels have no chance of dilating. The reaction following a cold douche to the feet two or three times a day is better than any wrapping.

SILLMAN, (Phila., Pa.,)—You probably refer to the poison so frequently used by the Italians in the seventeenth century which was called "aqua tofana," from the name of the old woman Tofania, who made and sold it in small flat vials which she called Manna of St. Nicolas, because on one side was an image of the saint. She carried on this traffic for half a century and eluded the police, but on being detected confessed that she had been a party in poisoning 600 people. Numerous persons were implicated by her of all ranks, and many of them were publicly executed. All Italy was thrown into a ferment, and many fled, while some persons of distinction, on conviction were strangled in prison. It appeared to have been used mainly by married women who were tired of their husbands. Four or six drops were a fatal dose; but the effect was not sudden and therefore not suspected. It was as clear as water, but the chemists have not agreed about its real composition. A proclamation of the Pope described it as aquafortis distilled in arsenic, and others considered it as a solution of crystallized arsenic. The secret of its preparation was conveyed to Paris, where the Marchioness de Brinvilliers poisoned her father and two brothers, and she, with many others, were executed, and the preparers of it were burned at the stake.

DEMOSTH., (Baltimore, Md.,)—Few greater mistakes in life are possible than marriage in haste, which is generally followed by repentance at leisure. Do not try to work yourself up to a persuasion that you are in love, but sit down quietly and think whether at your early age, and while struggling with the up-hill task of developing a business, you really want a wife. If you are sure on this point, and also feel convinced that circumstances justify your marriage—that, in fact, you have money and time to spend on a household, and this very young girl, whom you have seen only once, is so much in your liking—of course you must go again and ask her father's permission to visit. Few men, however self-possessed, would be wise to plunge headlong into a peril of the kind. They are generally the inexperienced in society who take these "leaps in the dark," and a large percentage are lamed and crippled for their pains. We do not doubt the possibility of a satisfactory friendship ripening into love, or being formed at first sight, but the occurrence is not common; and for one such case probably there are fifty in which the love-sick swain mistakes for the tender passion the genial susceptibility of a spirit bounding under the influence of an unaccustomed necktie, and escapes the consequences of an impulsive declaration in years of regretful reserve or resentful melancholy.